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PHILOSOPHICAL

RESEARCH

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PHILOSOPHICAL
RHAPSODIES.

FRAGMENTS

OF

AKBUR OF BETLIS.

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AKBUR OF BETLIS

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

F R A G M E N T S

O F

A K B U R O F B E T L I S.

C O N T A I N I N G

R E F L E C T I O N S

O N T H E

L A W S, M A N N E R S, C U S T O M S a n d R E L I G I O N S,

O F C E R T A I N

A S I A T I C, A F R I C, a n d E U R O P E A N N A T I O N S.

C O L L E C T E D A N D N O W F I R S T P U B L I S H E D.

By RICHARD JOSEPH SULLIVAN, Esq.

Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.

I N T H R E E V O L U M E S.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, PALL-MALL, BOOKSELLER TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, AND
THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCES.

M.DCC.LXXXIV.

58 39



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Fragments were written by a native of Affyria, who, in very early youth, was removed to the continent of Europe, and thence to England. During his residence in England with a friend of his father's, he became instructed in its language, and in the principles of its religion. He then travelled ; and in various countries threw together the reflections which appear in the following sheets. The imperfections of style, and the want of method, observable in the arrangement of these Fragments, will require

quire a great degree of candour and indulgence in the reader. Akbur was a benevolent man and a Christian ; but he had not time or opportunity to erect himself into an author. With all his errors, however, there is still something novel and not unworthy of observation in his remarks ; he never designedly misleads : when he is wrong, he is so without being sensible of it himself. The reader will perceive that few references are made, though historical facts and consequent deductions have here and there been borrowed : this must be attributed to the unsettled state of life of the author. Constantly roaming from one country to another, it was impossible for him to have those books and materials to turn to, which references constantly required ; moreover, the familiar style of private communication did not admit of precision, or a dry appeal to authorities.

In

A D V E R T I S E M E N T. ▼

In a word, Akbur was a friend of his fellow creatures, and a zealous advocate for the offices of humanity; and, as such, (now that he is no more) the editor, without any great degree of apprehension, ushers his thoughts to the world, in their original, unadorned, and simple garb.

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PRELIMINARY FRAGMENT.

WE have already traversed, together, many of the fields of practical and of speculative knowledge. The same dispositions, from our earliest days, have led us to the same pursuits. We have viewed the ways and the diversities of man, as through the same optic. — You, indeed, with a discrimination which analyzed the minutest parts ; — I with a carelessness which hath bordered upon inattention. To whom, therefore, can I address these thoughts with so much propriety as to you ? — to you, who have been my friend and my fellow labourer ; — who have guided me in the pursuit of

truth, and who have shewn me the surest road to the acquisition of that tranquillity, which alone can constitute our happiness.

The subject I have now undertaken to discuss, and which you must pardon me for dedicating to you, contains a vast variety of matter. Human affairs have already gone through the most scrutinizing as well as the most eloquent investigations. It cannot, then, appear but as presumption, temerity, or possibly both, that one so inadequate to the task should adventure to handle what hath so ably been discussed before. To apologize to you for such an attempt, would, I own, be in some degree meritorious, and might be the means of mitigating that censure which I have too much reason to apprehend ; but I am at a loss what apology to make, or how to excuse myself. The fact is, and I am not ignorant of it, — no reflections or sentiments whatever should be obtruded on a
4 subject

subject of this nature, but such as can display an intrinsic stamp of novelty or genius. This is an irrefragable position; and the more grievous, as I have certain indications, that before we get to a conclusion, a lamentable deficiency of both the one and the other will be found in our present undertaking. One advantage, indeed, and that alone, of which I can have an idea, and which may possibly tend towards my pardon, is, that in my wanderings, I may by chance hit upon a few opinions, some drawn from study, and some from observation, which being placed on the level with my own ordinary capacity, may by that means be detailed in a more familiar manner than they have hitherto been by men who have written professedly on the subject.

Reflections on laws, manners, customs, and religions, must unavoidably be dry. Mental travelling can never

be so pleasant or so amusing as that wherein the corporeal faculties have been principally engaged. The one we drawl over, in the yawning disposition of insipidity ; whereas the other exhilarates, and keeps us up to the spur and spirit of the moment. Enlivened by the subject, with what unfeigned satisfaction do we not follow the kindly-disposed traveller in every step of his career ! We attend him, as the companions of his inquiries. We fairly become partakers with him of every vicissitude of pain and satisfaction which he meets with in his journey.

While philosophy thus goes hand in hand with the chearful spirit which sedulously searcheth after information, nothing can be more amusing ; neither can any species of communication tend more to the improvement, or to the general advantage of mankind. To travellers like these, the tribute of our praise
is

is unquestionably due; and we yield it, in the satisfaction we are happy to acknowledge we have received from their several performances. Animated description, with anecdote interspersed in lively language and good humour, is the most certain method of attracting admiration.

Convinced as I am of all these advantages, which the professed traveller possesses who submits his opinions to his friends, or to the world, it would be to me, you may be sure, of infinite satisfaction, could I avail myself of aids which I shall so much stand in need of. But the nature of my design throws an insuperable obstacle in my way. Many of the countries which are to be the subject of our inquiries, it is true, I have visited, and have resided in some of them for years; but others I can only judge of from report. Propriety therefore requires that all, and each of them should come under review, in a si-

milar mode of exhibition. Reflection will by such means be divested of prejudice, and investigation will at least have the chance of being as candid and correct as the materials we have to go upon, and our capacity of judgement will admit.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT I.

TO irradiate the mind with real and essential truth, its first operations, even while acquiring the rudiments of education, should be turned to its own species indiscriminately. — Man should be studied. — How many windings and turnings! — How many absurdities and contradictions are perceptible in his character! Proteus like, he eludes, unless carefully watched, the most prying eyes. The individual, and the many, should be the first employment of the human intellect. This knowledge tolerably fixed, what may not eventually be expected? Other objects of the creation are at leisure to be observed. At every step we take, and in every stage of our existence, we shall find food in abundance for speculation.

B 4

lation. To view himself, then—to form a judgement of the relation he bears to other beings, and of the moral obligations which bind him to his species in general—these should undoubtedly be the first consideration of him who is to adhere to the practice, more than to the theory of philosophy. Next to these, the ties which link him to the society in which he moves should employ his thoughts, his immediate safety depending on a due attention to the relation in which he stands to his fellow citizens. But to be the true friend of mankind, and it is this I would inculcate, he should first be made to consider his species, as I have already said, in the general point of view; this being the way, and the only way to expand the heart, and to make the mind spurn the idea, too carefully instilled in some countries, of a pre-established distinction of kinds of the human race. Criminal, arrogant, unchristianlike pretension!—The uncharitable

charitable offspring of bigotry and ignorance. No imaginary barrier can or should be supposed to subsist between the inhabitants of one country and the inhabitants of another. We all of us should be considered as children of the same common father; and in humble, grateful imitation of him, we each should endeavour, indiscriminately, to manifest the kindest and most benevolent offices to the whole circle of our fellow creatures.

In hinting at this, the indispensable discipline and duty, I must suppose, of a truly-enlightened man, how forcibly does the necessity appear that the mind should be early freed from prejudice, and all illiberal associations of ideas! Vices and virtues bear a near similitude in all countries. If an intrepid, an informed, and a kind-hearted disposition is looked upon by us as perfection in a character, the same is found to be the most estimable propensity in the
most

most distant corner of the globe. I will confess we all are presumptuously apt, from the wisest to the most ignorant, to form a standard of opinion for the rest of mankind; a standard, springing from the prejudices which we have ourselves locally imbibed; for where is the man, who, not accustomed to reflection, but who looks upon certain tenets of his own country as infallible? Will not the skin-clad Samoide laugh at the voluptuous, silken-robed Asiatic?—The greasy, offensive Hottentot, at the powdered, perfumed European? And whence all this? Comes it not from the want of spirit and information? Trust, *trust*, is the rock we split upon. We take almost every opinion upon trust. An unaccountable inanity of mind pervades the greatest part of the human race. We talk of philanthropy, and we talk of conviction founded on the basis of comparison, but both are merely words—words, soothing and tickling to the ear, but unhappily swollen with emptiness, and

dispossessed

dispossessed of every beneficial meaning. Nor are nations denominated barbarous, those alone who are thus infatuated and blind ; many of the most civilized are in an equal, if not a more unpardonable degree of social transgression ; because they have the ready means of information.

But we will admit there are candid, rational lovers of their species, who burst these unnatural shackles of error ; who despise the arrogance of pretension, and who withhold belief from the doctrine which supposes perfection exclusively vested in a peculiar tribe. Customs and manners may differ ; but mankind they will hold intrinsically the same. They will acknowledge error ; but they will at the same time confidently assert it not to be immutable. Some societies, they will say, have evidently the start of others ; but their enlightening hath been owing to accidental causes. These, in darkness, will

will in their turn have their day. Each must have a beginning, for none have yet been found, but who, right or wrong, have been for a time, inflexibly partial to that which hath been handed down to them by their fathers. Tenacity is congenial, and in an especial manner, obstinately so to young or distantly-situated communities; and therefore nothing so difficult, although perhaps pernicious in its duration, as to eradicate what hath been sanctified by time, or by the religion of a country.

There are, however, certain general principles and regulations, for the conduct which mankind should hold, that are universal, and must be always so, because they are conformable to the wants and the necessities of man, and because they are conformable to the invariable nature of things; but the relative situation of man is that which more immediately concerns

us to understand. He who studies him, therefore, as he is daily, as he is hourly to be studied, and analyzes his actions, will soon acquire a fund of that useful and essential knowledge, which being erected on the suffrage of all ages and all nations, will always be conformable to the views and to the actions of mankind. Particular modes, particular circumstances may render the externals of things widely different; but the pursuit of the mind, with all its operations, will be found invariably the same. To investigate, therefore, the variety of characters which observation and which history hands down to us, and which is presented to our constant view, and carefully and diligently to search into the causes which produce the effects that heretofore have, and evermore must continue to draw our admiration — this is the way to fix and to strengthen the penetration of the mind, and ultimately to establish that unprejudiced judge-

judgment, which should be the aim of all who have an affection to their species, and who are desirous of promoting the happiness and the welfare of the human race.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT II.

SHALL I venture to say that no man, who is not professionally bred, can have occasion for an intimate knowledge of sciences which are abstruse or speculative? I will say it, and I think I can support it: for nothing can be truer than the remark, that we are not placed here to attend to the motions of the stars, or to pin ourselves to that physical knowledge which is of such rare emergence, that one man may know another half his life, without being able to estimate his skill in hydrostatics or astronomy. Let him have a general, not a particular acquaintance with them; but let the strong bent of his mind be turned to what must be of infinitely more consequence, moral and philosophical inquiries. From studies like these he is certain to reap every advantage. The principles of civil society will by this means become known

known to him; the arts of legislation, with all its several forms of government, and the causes of those several forms, will gradually unfold themselves, with all the recommendations of ability and precision. The various dispositions of his fellow creatures will unflatteringly be exhibited in all situations, in all climates, and in all countries. The vices, the follies, and the virtues of his species, will be candidly laid open to him; and thus, in contemplating the phenomena, if I may be allowed the expression, of this sublunary scene, he will be enabled to form a just and valuable estimate of the spring of those advantages and disadvantages, and of that superiority which hath been claimed, and which hath apparently existed in certain nations.

Too apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure or subtil; but to know
That which before us lies in daily life
Is the prime wisdom.

MILTON.

National

National pride, as I have cursorily noticed, is no partial failing; it is universal; it is met with in the most miserable, as strongly marked, as in the most affluent and luxurious; nor is it, in fact, without its uses. Some evils, no doubt, attend it; but each of them must be considered separately and conjointly, and with the same portion of allowance as some of the happiest, and the most pernicious, dispositions of the soul, which often burst into Being from the same source, actuated upon by the occasion of the moment.

'Tis Heaven each passion tends,
 And different men directs to different ends.
 Extremes in nature equal good produce;
 Extremes in man concur to general use. POPE.

But do we know of any impulsive principle, which hath been a greater spur to the growth of merit, whether we consider it nationally or individually, than the pride of which we are speaking? Even

in the common walks of life, what propensity so strong or beneficial? ambition may operate with some, avarice may prevail with others; but ambition has its end in the accomplishment, perhaps, of a single object; and avarice, too selfish in its nature, can never appear as a cherisher of that plant which is to bear the blossom of general utility. The same cannot be said of pride.

Pride, which in some, like “an eagle builds among the stars,” and, in others, “lark like, nests upon the ground,” will undoubtedly, under proper subordination, and turned to proper ends, frequently atchieve wonders. It is one of the most wholesome ingredients in the human composition; and when it proceeds disinterestedly and from patriotic affection, is, probably, the most advantageous disposition in society.

And

And again, let me ask, where is it not to be met with? In what corner of the globe are there not characters to be found, so formed by nature or education, as exultingly to erect their chests, in the conviction of either a real or an imaginary superiority? and what is the injury that results from this importance? None. Be it applauded then. It must indisputably be of service. It will at least urge individuals to discharge their duty as men and citizens, not only with alacrity but with satisfaction; and will ultimately teach them to respect those of countries different from their own, who are actuated by motives of a similar nature.

The cardinal virtues are not the produce of a particular or pre-destined soil. Sense and sincerity will be found diffused over the whole earth. This or that country may indeed possess them in a more ample extent than others; but no spot

can be pitched upon, however uncivilized and plunged in error, where truth does not exist, or where she will not be attended to and embraced, if properly made known to her uninstructed children.

The principle of pride and of national attachment which I thus insist upon, has been, it must be confessed, the cause of numberless evils to mankind. It has inflamed the minds of the turbulent and ambitious; it has created rivalships which have engendered war, with all its dire concomitants; it has been the destruction of millions; and yet, how has it been possible to substitute a propensity less calamitous! I will acknowledge it to have been the parent of infinite misery; but how was that misery to have been avoided?

In early ages, the general transactions and business of society were carried on, and in a certain degree, flourished, without

the advantages which are inseparably annexed to a social and permanent compact; and the same may be observed in some countries even at this day. But civilization in such cases, is still in its infancy, and consequently pride can be of little utility. It is not until property increases that the means of safety become multiplied, and a settled community gradually taking root, that the spirit of emulation gets abroad; that the clashing of interests, glory or renown, urges to premeditated defence; and that thence follow jealousy, injury, and revenge.

On the general review of things, indeed, it would seem that war and contention are as natural to man as to animals of an inferior class; that he cannot exist without them; and that strife, which perhaps arises from a species of fatality, or from the depravity of a few, is the principal object of our attention; but for the

honour of our race, we will not allow this conclusion in its fullest extent. It would be too severe to admit, that the destruction of our fellow creatures, the mad desire of victory and of conquest, are the pervading dispositions of our souls; we may certainly account in a far different manner for the unhappy prevalency of discord.

The extravagancies of men have, in all ages, been found more alluring and contagious than the sober exertions of moderation and reason: the conqueror, therefore, has ever been looked upon with wonder and admiration. The companions of his fortunes, the interested in his successes, together with the vast herd, who greedily follow the first scent that is given to them; these, one and all, extol the prodigious creature; they hold him up to the adoration of his countrymen; they almost exalt him to a divinity. At length
some

some future historian, anxious for the hero's glory, or for the display of his own abilities, celebrates with the flowers of rhetoric the achievements of the field. All the carnage of war he tenderly passes over; they are accidents unavoidable. Objects of infinitely more importance occupy his attention. Besprinkling the glorious man with all the incense of panegyric, he decks out the business of war in the most bewitching and captivating garments. The trifling cries of nature, — the horrors of dispassionate destruction; — these he kindly conceals from the knowledge of the weak-hearted: he only labours at the greatness of his subject; the goodness of it is of no consideration. In a word, illusion has reconciled the world to discord more than any innate depravity of our nature. Great writers have led us astray. So true is the saying of a sensible moralist, that if one man only were placed upon earth, he would be

made to fight against gods or devils,—
or else against his own shadow. The
peaceful and the amiable are not brilliant
enough for record.

The substance of history in general is
little else than a recapitulation of feuds
and sanguinary animosities; of such and
such men being born in such and such
countries; of hostilities being commenced
on such and such days; of thousands
being cut to pieces in this place, and
tens of thousands massacred in that: thus,
from one page to another, ringing the
bloody chime of murder and destruction!*

But, unhappily and indelibly stained as
the annals of mankind have been with
narratives of this nature, let us, as in-
deed we may, from our own observation,
conclude, that the fault is to be found in

* In 160 years, during the declension of the
Roman empire, seventy persons bore the imperial
name of Cæsar. — What carnage!

history,

history, where the leffer have been too frequently substituted for the more estimable traits of society. And that there have been in all ages, — that there are still, and that there ever will be, those whose attention, happily turned from such destructive ends, will always be given to the security and benefit of their fellow creatures; and who will with fervency cry out, “Happy are the people
 “whose kings have not been renowned
 “in story!”

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T III.

IT has long been a disputed point, and always will continue so, for it never can be cleared up, which was the first, and which the best-peopled country of this terraqueous globe. Most writers, I think, incline to the East, and apparently (do not accuse me of prejudice) with good reason; for warm climates, where vegetation is quick, and where the necessaries of life may be easily procured, are surely not only the best adapted to immediate existence, but are such as must enable the inhabitants to provide for their families, with a satisfaction which cannot but lend a most material assistance to population. That this could not have been the case in northern regions, is evident. Much labour and unremitting industry were required under the pressure of a cold and an ungenial
atmos-

atmosphere. Animals who fed on grafs, or preyed upon each other, were probably the aborigines of most parts of Europe; whereas the East, which hath always poured forth the most valuable treasures, and in the greatest abundance, must at all times have served as an asylum and a nursery for the human species : and in fact we find from the earliest accounts, that the East was ever celebrated for its numerous inhabitants. But the inquiry, it must be confessed, is useless ; suffice it, that the East, in all ages, has been considered as the richest and the most populous country in the world, and that it had produced the fairest fruits of science, at a time when the seeds were only thinly scattered, or barely taking root in the western hemisphere. The peopling of this earth, then, we will leave to those fabricators of systems, who delight in uncommon exertions of the imagination, and
who,

who, on hypothetical foundations, erect the strangest and most whimsical edifices, —castles of air; curious, but untenable !

The distinct varieties of the human race are, however, much more worthy of attention ; especially as it is still an undetermined point, whether there were originally different races of our species, or whether all men were of one race, according to our christian-like belief. The account given us by Moses of our first parents, is by some considered as allegorical, and by others as thoroughly orthodox ; whilst there are not wanting those who contend that many pairs were originally created, and that the variety proceeds from climate, and climate only. Which is the most credible, cannot possibly be determined ; much difficulty will, no doubt, occur in the support of all and either of these opinions. Good and evil may certainly be typified by the names of the first inhabitants of Paradise. Providence

dence might have ordained us to have proceeded from one pair ; or several pairs might have been created, as best should seem to the glorious, the unerring Maker of the whole. Human understanding, however, will determine for itself ; and without the smallest presumption, or without meaning to attack religion, will very possibly conclude, “ that apparently there could have been no necessity why we should all have proceeded from one man and one woman, as it would appear most consonant to the majesty of God, to suppose, that each portion of the earth should have had at its origin its own distinct inhabitants.” But here a difficulty, not to be surmounted, will start against the conclusion ; for admitting, that as the divine word could, so it actually did breathe existence into varieties of the human species at the creation.—How comes it—that so contrary to all the other parts of nature, where the means are so admirably suited to the end, that the dissimilitude of configuration

tion and complection should be so great, as it is observed to be in people living in the same climate, and very nearly treading on the same soil? Turn your eyes towards the Laplander and the man of Friesland—see what a variety in the conformation of these beings—look again at the inhabitant of Abyssinia, and the woolley-headed Coffre of Negroeland, what a distinction is there! and yet how little, how very little difference in the air they breathe.

Whichever side we lean to, difficulties of this nature will ever present themselves. If we subscribe to the belief of a first pair, and no more, the accounting for the distinctions which now exist, and which according to the natural course of things, must have proceeded from climate, (climate having no effect upon embryos) will puzzle the stoutest theologian that ever upheld the doctrine. If we subscribe

to the contrary opinion, the obstacle of climate lies before us still.

Naturalists maintain, that all animals, the human included, are possessed by Providence from their birth with certain properties suitable to their peculiar situation and condition : fur to quadrupeds in cold countries ; hair in climates that are hot ; strong athletic limbs, and a large portion of blood to the man in temperate regions ; with diminutive stature, and, to repel frigidity, an unctuous substance in the frame of the timid son of the Frozen Land. But, as I observed before, if this were really the case, how happens it that there is so palpable a variety in the forms, colours, dispositions and propensities of children of the same parent soil ? The question is not to be resolved ; at least I must think so, if reason be admitted in such bewildering disquisitions.

—We

—We were form'd then, say'st thou ? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son ? strange point and new !
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd ; who saw
When this creation was ? remember'st thou
Thy making, while the maker gave thee being ?

PAR. LOST, B. 5, V. 855.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT IV.

A Little arbitrarily, but not without ingenuity, naturalists have classed the race of man in six divisions. To begin with the polar regions : Here he is said to be brown, short, oddly shaped, and savage ; the Tartar is represented olive coloured, middle sized, ugly, and robust ; the southern Asiatic,—of a dark olive tint, slender shape, straight black hair and feeble ; the negroe of Africk,—black, smooth skinned, wooly headed, and well shaped ; the American,—copper coloured, with black hair, small eyes, and slight limbs ; the European and bordering nations,—white of different shades, with fine hair, large limbs, and much bodily vigour.

These are the six classes in which we are placed ; and here close the divisions ; systematical enough, but erroneous and in-

complete. Before we get to the end of our subject, instances in proof will probably present themselves ; for the present, therefore, we will content ourselves with a disposition so regularly made.

Thus filed off in bodies, to use a military phrase, mankind have been observed in some countries to diminish in numbers considerably, and in others to increase, but not at the same time, and in such perfect ratio, that the increase of the one can possibly fill up the casualties of the other. If we give credit to the calculations that have been made on this head, and which are supposed (I will not say how justly) to be tolerably exact ; one tenth part of the people do not exist now that did in former days *. An astonishing decrease,

* It appears from the registers of England, that one half of the children born in Great Britain die under twelve years of age. Is this a natural evil ? most probably it is not : the offspring of man is not surely more

2

fatally

crease, if true ; but whence has it proceeded ? Disease has not been more prevalent, wars have not been more desolating, nor have any supernatural calamities afflicted us, since our submerſion by the flood.

Some hidden defect, ſome latent poiſon, muſt work this alarming catastrophe. A lingering diſeaſe of this nature, a decay ſo ſerious in its progreſs, portends no permanency to mankind : ſhould it continue, adieu ye dreams, adieu ye phantaſies of exiſtence ! No crimes, no monſtrous enormities, need bring on a ſecond deſtruction of ſuch miſerable flutterers of a day. The

fatally marked out than the offspring of animals of an inferior rank in nature ; and that ſuch animals are not ſo liable as man to die young is evident. Are we not to look for it in the art that is uſed with infants ? Brutes never bring up their young by proxy. Every creature, except the human, as has been well obſerved, is the nurſe of its own offspring, and they thrive accordingly ; were it otherwiſe, the young of all animals would ſhare a ſimilar fate with thoſe of the young of the human ſpecies.

crowd pressing on each other, will gradually quit the stage. The hour must come when the race will be extinct, when all shall be at an end.

The human species, however—and let us dwell on the subject while we are able—whether in a savage or a civilized state, shews itself, in its offspring, every where alike: the form is the same. The capacity for receiving, by imitation, every necessary information, proves, that in the intellectual faculty, there is little difference. The arrangement and culture of the young ideas, therefore, and the society into which we may be thrown, are the efficient causes on which we must rest the superiour exertion of every particular talent and virtuous disposition. Properly speaking, indeed, we should stile ourselves factitious, and not natural beings; creatures of art, formed by discipline and society, into mere machines:

'Tis education forms the common mind :

Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd. POPE.

Look at the savage, wild in the woods, and with him contrast the man who is polished by society. What a difference ! Not so much in externals ; but, in their passions and inclinations, what a dissimilitude ! The happiness of the one, you will find, requires nothing more than liberty, food, indolence, and repose ; beyond these gratifications he has not a thought. The man of cultivated understanding, on the other hand, sickens at the barbarous dispositions of so senseless a wretch ; the felicity he delights in dwells in refinement ; in the luxury of ease, and in sensual enjoyment ; his mind, enlightened and penetrating, soars to the contemplation of this mighty maze, “ a wild, where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot.” He labours in the pursuit of ambition ; or he modestly treads, with resignation, the paths of morality and peace.

And yet the positive advantages which the one possesses over the other, are not perhaps so great as might be expected. Society entails anxiety and care; the unfettered state, again, brings with it a total disregard to thought or apprehension; to-morrow may provide for the wants which to-morrow may occasion; but we will not give into the idea, that the rude state of man can be equally gratifying and comfortable, with that which has been polished by time and attention. A civilized community is certainly preferable to one that is uncultivated, although some extraordinary virtues may be seen to exist in the characters that form the latter; for candour, sincerity, resolution and perseverance; passive and active courage, together with hospitality and good faith, are as frequently the strongest marked traits in a refined society as in a people denominated barbarous and wild.

With

With incontrovertible propensities to society, observable in every quarter of the universe, what infatuation is it in certain writers, paradoxically to conjecture, that man was ordained to roam a solitary being! If no other reason presented itself, surely the superior advantages which he derives from social intercourse would be alone sufficient to prove, that he was destined to mix with his fellow creatures—Can the association of any other animals turn to the same account? No one, I fancy, will hazard the conjecture. Why then cannot the human species be supposed to follow that unerring principle of instinct, which is observed to regulate the conduct of every other animal of the creation? If the bird, the fish, and the beast of the field, follow invariably the law prescribed to its immediate class, why should we alone differ so greatly from the pre-determined order of Providence? Is man alone, man the first acknowledged of

created beings—is man alone to run counter to the ends for which he is declared to have been formed? If we had been destined from the beginning to stalk about melancholy and wretched wanderers through the woods, how came it that we so soon started from the law which had been prescribed to us, and feeling the inconveniency of solitude, that we should so universally have formed ourselves into hordes and associated bodies?

Most animals herd with each other, from the smallest insect that flits around the pool, to the towering elephant that ranges through the forest. Of these, though evidently not calculated for society, as is the human species, many will be found, it is true, to straggle; but are we therefore to conclude, that because they are sometimes scattered, because they are indiscriminate in their connections, and because they are unrestrained by formal laws,

laws, that we should by consequence be doomed to a solitary and a more unfocial existence than it is evident they are ? What unaccountable hypotheses ! What extravagant chimæras !

The real disposition of the human species hath been in all ages and in all countries alike. There has always been a natural sympathy and attraction ; the instinctive affection of the sexes has principally served to establish the permanency of society by the ties and the obligations it has occasioned. Self love is predominant in all ; our wives, our children, every object that contributes to our felicity, is dear to us. Man is fond of what he can call his own. In short, if the propagation of the human race be a natural and instinctive passion ; if the care of our offspring in helpless childhood be not repugnant to the feelings of the parent ; it then will follow, and rash is he that will deny it,

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that society is, and must be, natural to man; and that estranged from each other, the human species never did nor ever can subsist.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT V.

WE have said, that since mankind have had a situation appropriated to them in this world, there must have been some society ; not indeed that luxurious, that refined commixture, which modern times afford ; but a society wherein they lived in some degree dependent on the good offices of each other. That the accounts we have of what are called the first ages, do not present the state of society in those days as in any respect desirable, must be readily allowed. The apparent simplicity which then reigned, and which has since been so celebrated, was palpably barbarous and unenviable ; it presented nothing but what was rude and uncultivated ; a little removed from the savage state ; and when the human mind first began, with all the eagerness of rapacity, to dwell on its own immediate

diate interest. At that epoch, man will appear to have been covered with vice, hideous and deformed: most of the histories of antient times now extant, shew that discord very early began to reign among us, and that bloodshed and slaughter were known almost as soon as there were men*. How sanguinary do we appear from even the sacred records ! Wild beasts were not more furious where food or the fiercest passions were concerned ; blood gushed in streams from the effects of rage, and the unbridled desires of brutal appetite. Victory then was the victory of monsters ; no bounds were set to vengeance, which the merciless extirpation of each other alone could satisfy.

The first perceptions, however, the first rudiments of science, began to shew them-

* And the Lord said unto Cain, the first born,
 “ Thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the
 “ ground.”

felves

selves in times like these. What are the most admired exertions of human ability, but improvements on what, in the earliest ages, had been but poorly understood? Shall we say, that ships and palaces, with a thousand other efforts of human genius, have been the growth of modern days? The assertion would be preposterous; rafts, prows, and cottages, preceded what are now the objects of admiration. We have borrowed from those who lived in a state of rude and uncivilized nature. We have indeed improved; and by the continued accession of new and more determinate ideas, have advanced considerably farther than they did in the intricate walks of science; but we are indebted to them for the original designs.

The effects of what is called antient simplicity were long felt; ambition, superstition, lust, and revenge, ruled uncontrollably the greatest portion of mankind. The
magistrates

magistrates lorded it with sceptres of iron; the people groaned under the pressure of the yoke. Priests in the service of God, pillaged and fed on the laborious industry of the poor. Impediments such as these could not but obstruct the advancement of knowledge and science. The day, however, broke, after years of ignorance and infatuation: men then saw their way, and the mind, struggling for freedom, emancipated itself from that slavery in which it had continued shackled from the remotest periods of time.

In this manner contemplating the human disposition, the nearer we go to the state of nature, the more humiliating shall we appear as rational beings; the more enormous will be found the crimes which stain the character of our race. Society therefore, free, but wholesomely regulated society, is alone capable of embellishing and rendering us generally
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and individually happy : it is the parent of safety, the beneficial spring of those sciences and arts which adorn and dignify man, and which render him, in the end, the merited possessor of the pre-eminence he claims.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT VI.

MAN was born to labour—the earth requires it. Were it not for the operations of both body and mind, the myriads of beings whom this globe contains would not find subsistence : the soil indeed possesses the principles of vegetative life, but care and cultivation must make it sufficiently productive. Health and future ease require that we should labour ; for what dreadful diseases, what frightful calamities afflict the human frame, where stagnate waters, marshy fens, and uncleared woods, cast forth their baneful exhalations—labour is therefore a necessary consequence of our existence. Moreover, the products of this world are in general so incomplete in their origin, and so scattered by the wise hand of Nature, that it should seem as if, in the providential care of her children,

children, she had resolved that every man should work on his own particular spot, and then, by intercourse and traffic, to assist each other; so that a common interest, and a mutual attraction, should be every where established.

Radical dependencies like these, first laid the foundation of large communities; but previous to this, and to the ordination of any particular laws for uniting society, a language must have been formed, and the force and meaning of it must have been generally understood.

Language is universal, and not confined to man: almost every animal, that comes within our observation, has some peculiar method by which he can render himself intelligible to his species by sound. If at any time mankind were without language, the eyes must have been used as the organs of communicating thought. How forcibly,

how universally understood are those features, by even the most ignorant and uncivilized. Range from one extremity of the earth to the other, the language of the eyes will be the language of every human being you shall meet; nay, so superior will you find it to any, the most artificial, combination of words, (and here I rest myself upon the evidence of my fair readers) that a look will be frequently more expressive and intelligible than the most eloquent and persuasive flow of speech.

But as we have said before, language is universal: whether there was a time when we could not articulate sounds, and whether at a subsequent period, the most flexible organs, by accident, modulated sounds into words, and these again came to be studied by imitation,—whether such was the fate of man, in any degenerate period of his existence, I will not pretend to determine. Deep-thinking men must decide

cide upon such points, apparently inexplicable; adverting, as they go along, to what the Rabbins support, the existence of the Hebrew dialect from the beginning of the world. Adam and Eve, they say, spoke it; the former even came from the hands of God, with innate ideas, and an innate acquaintance with the Jewish language*.

With us, however, who are neither miraculously informed, nor yet bold in our conclusions, the use of the tongue will undoubtedly be thought as old as that of any of the other members of our frame. The only records we have, support us in such a belief; the contrary opinion, which is held forth by some, is merely the result

* In a dispute between the Phrygians and Egyptians relative to the antiquity of the two nations, Psammetichus, king of Egypt, caused two new-born infants to be shut up with dumb nurses; when they grew up they were heard, when hungry, to pronounce the word *bekkos*, which in the Phrygian dialect signified bread: this determined the point in favour of the Phrygians.

the result of ingenious speculation, or of ignorance at best, engrafted on superstition.

While we admit (and it is impossible to do otherwise) this universality of speech, how shall we be able to account for the varieties of language among the human race, especially as we are told, that there was but one language when it was presumptuously resolved to build a tower in the land of Shinaar? The Lord, I know, it is said, confounded this language on account of our temerity, and then scattered us abroad. This was to sow the seeds of variety, no doubt; but are we to receive this account in the literal sense in which it is given, or shall we venture to explain away the inconsistencies of it, as others have done before us? The discussion, I fancy, would lead us too far; it involves too much; let us think, therefore, as we please; but, as no good can result from the inquiry, let us be humble and silent.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT VII.

FROM the articulation of sounds, to the communication of our thoughts by writing—that sublime art!—the distance must have been great. Hieroglyphics and rude sketches of drawings, were, no doubt, the rudiments of that extraordinary correspondence which hath been since established between intellectual minds. On imperfect essays such as these, the mind must have dwelt a considerable length of time; hence gradually improving, the established form that emblematically conveyed the sense, at length succeeded to the crude representation, which was but partially, perhaps individually understood, until a fixt and a simple character, arising from reflections on the conveniency of combination, ultimately produced an al-

phabet formed to exprefs and to convey to the uttermoſt parts of the earth, thoſe ſentiments of the heart which originally were confined to ſpeech, and to oral communication. That theſe were the progreſſive ſteps of the art of writing, is evident from the accounts we have of the Chineſe, the Indians, the Egyptians, the Phænicians, the Æthiopeans, Etrufcans, and many other nations, ſcattered and diſperſed as they have been through the various diviſions of the globe.

To give the excluſive invention of this art, therefore, to any one man, or to any one people, is incompatible with that juſtice which is due to every country alike.*

* Sir Iſaac Newton calls Mercury, who was ſurnamed Trismegiftus, the ſecretary of Ofiris, king of Egypt; and this Mercury, Diodorus Siculus ſays, “ was
“ the firſt who out of the coarſe and rude dialects of his
“ time, formed a regular language, and gave appella-
“ tions to the moſt uſeful things; he likewiſe invented
“ the firſt characters or letters, and even regulated the
“ harmony of words and phraſes.”

The fact is, that points of this nature cannot possibly be ascertained, buried as they are, in the misty and impenetrable clouds of antiquity; nor is it of consequence that they should. The north, the south, the east, and the west, have severally produced benefactors to mankind, whose inclinations and endeavours to be of service to their species, have been as strongly marked in one hemisphere as in the other; they proceeded from the same source, and tended to the same purposes. Let the Egyptians, the Phœnicians, and the Greeks, therefore, rest in quietness with the credit which some writers have given them for the invention of letters; we will not endeavour to wrest from them what, among themselves, one person or other most probably deserved.

The veneration which is paid to a character that has been of service to mankind, is surely laudable, nor is the worship even

that hath in some countries been paid to such illustrious memories, to be reprobated and condemned. Before the knowledge of the true Divinity descended amongst us, what could be more warrantable than the religious respect, the deification I may say, which grateful people paid to their protectors and benefactors ? Every nation owes esteem to those by whom it has been enlightened and amended. Their memories should be celebrated, the remembrance of them should be cherished ; even images, (I approach not here the pale of Christianity) representing their persons or their actions, should be honoured ; and in ages uninstructed by revelations from Heaven itself, what system could be more commendable, or what so immediately productive of good consequences to society ? The apotheosis of a heathen was not like the holy election of a bigot to a celestial rank ; to acquire divine honours, it was previously necessary to deserve them.

'Twas virtue only, or in arts or arms,
 Diffusing blessings, or averting harms ;
 The fame which in a fire the fons obey'd,
 A prince, the father of a people made ;
 On him, their fecond Providence, they hung,
 Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
 He, from the winding furrow called the food,
 Taught to command the fire, control the flood,
 Draw forth the monfters of th' abyfs profound,
 Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground, POPE.

I am well aware of the general objection to fuch gratitude. I am aware too that our real and artificial neceffities have been declared the firft caufes of exertion and improvement—felf intereft always fupposed in view ;—and that luxury and refinement have, on that fame felfifh principle, been accounted the great promoters of arts, fciences and traffic ; that it hath likewise been averred, that avarice, ambition and envy, have been, are ftill, and always will be, the grand fprings to actuate the majority of mankind. Let them be fo. What then ? Shall man refrain from venerating the appearance of that which is praife worthy, becaufe the reality of it be rarely met

with ? The idea is confined. It is wrong to insist on the defects of our nature ; let us rather be liberally erroneous, than backward in the commendation of our species. The wholesome purposes of society require the semblance at least, if not the reality of good in the human character.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT VIII.

FROM the hour in which the serpent beguiled the first woman, even unto this day, divines, philosophers, and all thinking beings, have puzzled themselves in endeavouring to find out, why such a plentiful harvest of evil should have been diffeminated among us. The inquiry is curious. To say it is necessary we should suffer all the miseries of battle and murder, plague, pestilence and famine, all the persecutions of bigoted and fanatic superstition, together with the other natural and physical evils to which we are liable, in order to our being rendered deserving of a something hereafter, is not only arbitrary and unsatisfactory, but pernicious, and has been most destructive in its consequences. With a rooted opinion of
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this nature, what bloody tragedies have been acted ! Have we not in our own times seen, and have we not heard of the purest and most simple doctrine under heaven, being turned, from such conviction, to the vilest and most dreadful purposes ? To save the souls of heretics, how many thousands have been doomed to perish in agony and torment ! The sovereign, the all-wise, the all-beneficent Ruler of the universe, hath been supplicated for mercy, whilst the knell of death has tolled unrelenting fury and extirpation on those of a contrary persuasion. Are we not told of the innocent, the uninstructed Indian, being barbarously reviled at the stake for not acknowledging that God, whose children exhibited no other character than that of blood-thirsty avarice, superstition and ferocity ?

That gracious Power, unto whom man in his wildest state looks up, hath, it must
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be acknowledged, scattered our way with the thorns of bitterness and affliction ; he hath placed us in the state where we inevitably suffer, “ where we come up and are cut down as it were a flower.” But the reason why misery is so strewn, the reason why it in general is so paramount to happiness, is far beyond the reach of human comprehension. The limited faculties of man are inadequate to the dispersion of those clouds, which enshroud the first principles of nature. Experience and good sense say, therefore, to our race, Be patient, have fortitude, be just, and enjoy such comforts, as in the sight of unerring wisdom are sufficient for you.

All nature is but art, unknown to thee ;
 All chance, direction, which thou canst not see ;
 All discord, harmony not understood ;
 All partial evil, universal good ;
 And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
 One truth is clear, whatever is, is right. POPE.

Thus let us sing ; it will be the surest
 sign of our being resigned, of our being
 content

content in our present state, and of our possessing at least gratitude of heart. There are, however, men, and those of a most extensive genius, who labour to destroy the great and the good effects of this humble submission, this entire resignation to the will of him who made us. But are not such men culpable in an unpardonable degree? Of what benefit to mankind can be the combating of so divine a tenet? Pride and philosophic arrogance may endeavour to oppose that doctrine, the belief of which is essential to the happiness of every rational creature. But is philosophy to authorize such wanton licentiousness? Shame on that criminal presumption, which would willingly deprive us of a hope that constitutes the greatest portion of our felicity! Abilities turned against the peace and happiness of society, should draw upon the possessor the execration and detestation of all who are anxious for the welfare of their species.

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The sacred truth of “whatever is, is right,” admissible in all religions, is found generally to prevail in those countries where the people are most civilized. But religious errors, even those which gave inhabitants to heaven, and peopled the earth, the air, and the seas, with a profusion of divinities, have been of infinite advantage to mankind. Religion softens the human character; it strengthens and cements the bonds of communities and nations; and if divested of bigotry and fanaticism, is capable of producing a multiplicity of blessings. We should reverence, therefore, those who took ignorance by the hand, and led her awfully and tremblingly to the altar; we should venerate them, for calling in the aid of supernatural means, to the rivetting of those moral duties, which they wished to instil into the minds of their fellow creatures. Convinced of the validity of these positions, shall we apprehend the attacks, the sneers of
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the infidel and the bigot? No. Men of sense whose minds are uncontracted, and to them alone we appeal, possess that liberality which will not hesitate to agree with us in an opinion, which has naught but charity for its object. The carpings of others, too feeble even to recoil on themselves, will evaporate in smoke, and die as soon as they are born.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T IX.

CHristianity, which would inspire its followers with benevolence and good humour, has nevertheless instilled into men of certain descriptions, far different principles. The mildness of the gospel has been transformed into gloominess and intolerance; I do not mean universally: I allude to particular times and to particular cases. But in the name of heaven, how is it possible for a man, seriously, to advance it as his opinion, that those who lived before our Saviour, and many who now exist, but who have had neither revelations nor miraculous assurances of his divinity; how can he, I say, assert, that they should, one and all, be given over to perdition, merely because they did not, and do not, believe in him as we do?

Can any thing be more monstrous or more repugnant even to the dictates of that faith which we profess, and of which we are so justly proud? And yet there are who say, “there is no salvation for the heathen.” This pernicious doctrine originated with the Jews; and bigots among the Christians have trod in the steps of their progenitors.

But why should that nation, and why should that little slip of ground, Palestine, have been so peculiarly blessed, as that none but those who sprouted up in the Land of Promise, should be capable of entering into the kingdom of heaven? The elder sons of Japheth, from whom, I think, it is said we are descended, would, surely, in such a case, have reason to complain of injustice; for why should we, the descendants, be more entitled to salvation than those our forefathers, who were holy and enlightened men?

men ? This general condemnation of all, who are ignorant of, and who preceded the coming of the Messiah, is strangely unaccountable ; it is like the custom of Borough-English, which places the inheritance in the youngest of the family.

Men like these, who hold the Divinity unjust, and who endeavour to bring him down to a level with themselves, are, if possible, even worse than those who have no belief in Providence. For the one, the errors of our judgement, and the incomprehensibility of the Godhead, may plead a little in excuse ; but for the other no apology can be admitted : their temerity is not to be pardoned. They make the all-merciful Disposer of the world more capricious than even man ; they represent him fickle, revengeful, and thirsty for the blood of those whom it would seem he had created, merely that he might

have the pleasure of tormenting them here and hereafter.

That sublime Majesty which is above us; that awful Power which animated all things, whose being we cannot discover, but whose existence is engraven on the minds of all: thus should God be represented. Yet we, who from the weakness of our nature, are incapable of inquiring into even what we are ourselves—We, the atoms of a day, the children of ignorance and mortality, are still adventurous enough to decide on a Being that eludes all search; and that is neither to be seen nor understood by corporeal sense. In every part of his works we perceive the Deity; we see him gloriously displayed in every object of the creation: but to endeavour to reason, or to contemplate on the essence of the Divine Nature, is the height of folly and presumption.

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The innate conviction of a beneficent Providence, is surely sufficient for every rational mind; it is all that is required by the human understanding, when left to itself and to its own deductions. Arbitrary representations, therefore, are to be treated as baneful and pernicious; injurious to God, and hurtful to society.

“Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor’d mind
“Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind.”

Shall this poor creature, who only acts and believes as he has been taught, be given to destruction? The intelligent and the merciful among Christians will answer no: all men to them appear the same.

In the disposition of this globe, in the distribution, or the dispersion of its inhabitants, all men were alike possessed of understanding and judgement. Left, then, to the dictates of their own reason,

every sect determined on the religion most suitable to its state: the Egyptian adopted one mode; the Phœnician adopted another; Chaldea reared up her children to worship the Divinity in the emblem of fire; Israel walked in the ways of truth, agreeably to the Lord's covenant with Moses. In this manner, every people formed to themselves a theological system of their own. Error, indeed, may have crept in, notwithstanding every effort to the contrary; but where is that human institution to be found which is wholly free from imperfection and frailty? When the Divinity condescends, by inspiration, to speak to his creatures, then the faith of those chosen people must be unequivocally pure; but till then, ignorance must lead the world astray: and however moral we may suppose mankind, they yet are not of the elect, no system of religion having been revealed to them in form.

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No religion is uniform and invariable. Reason prescribes no fixed rule for the externals of worship. Susceptible of various forms, and liable to the fluctuating opinions of those who are appointed to watch over the flock, the changes are great ; but the internal sense of it is still the same. Could we, as I have already said, but divest ourselves of that arrogance and pride, which a blind attachment to our own particular way of thinking too frequently engenders ; and could we but crush in the bud that hatred which too universally shoots up amongst sectaries of different persuasions, we then should see religion (as its first principles invariably inculcate) mild and charitable. Instead of this, however, different religionists, led on by prejudice, bigotry, and phrenzy, turn, what they denominate, a holy zeal into persecution, and the bitterest reproach. What a reflection on our nature ! What a picture of the hu-

man race! When the Indian prostrates himself before the rising sun; when the Mohammedan turns himself towards the tomb of his holy prophet; or when the Christian, in the fervency of prayer, addresses himself to his Maker; are they not severally actuated by the same motive—the honour of God? In several countries, many unaccountable, and many extravagant practices, are, no doubt, mingled with the ceremonials of religion; but should we abhor, should we detest an entire people because they are doomed, by heaven, to continue in a state of ignorance? Or should we persecute them, knowing, as we undoubtedly do, that their intention is certainly good? Innate knowledge of good and evil, of virtue and vice, is not given to man: we acquire the faculty of discriminating their qualities, from the ideas we receive in society; and not from any positive sense with which we are endued. Were it
other-

otherwise, man would be invariably the same: the cannibal, the unnatural expos-
er of innocent childhood; the savage
who devours his prisoner, each might be
common to every country; on the other
hand, perfection might be paramount,
and we should see nothing but humanity,
gentleness, mutual good offices, and the
most refined society.

To conclude, then, this sermon-like
Fragment, which I am afraid I have
dwelt on too long, let every man follow
the dictates of a clear conscience: let
such opinions and such actions be alone
punishable as affect the peace of that com-
munity in which he is placed; and let
all those of the ancients, who unfortu-
nately were, and those of the moderns,
who, from the same necessity, are still
uninformed of the tenets of the true be-
lief, let them rest with the charitable
good wishes of every Christian, and of
every

every being who has an affection for his species.

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

POPE.

Even St. Austin went so far as to acknowledge, that though “God would
“not give heaven to the Romans because
“they were heathens, he yet gave them
“the empire of the world because they
“were virtuous;” and that St. Austin was not the most tolerating of mankind, the history of his life is sufficient evidence.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T X.

THE range we are now about to take, and the different countries into which it will consequently carry us, will effectually confirm the orthodoxy of the text which I have wished to establish in the preceding pages. Nations of the most contrary dispositions will come before us: we shall in all find a religion; but in none shall we find one that is pure and unmixed with error.

Tartary shall be our first stage: I speak of Tartary first, because, among the various people of the world, of whom we have any record, the Tartars certainly have the pre-eminence, both from their conquests, and from the kingdoms they have founded. Almost every age, from
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the earliest periods of time, hath borne particular marks of their amazing power and superiority. It is unnecessary, however, to go very far back : we shall content ourselves with looking on them as the destroyers of the Roman empire ; the conquerors and rulers of the vast dominion of China ; the masters of the Mogul empire, which included the whole of the peninsula of India ; the lords of Persia ; and the possessors of other most extensive dominions, as well in Asia and Africa as in Europe.

The Tartars being descended, according to their own tradition, from the eldest son of Japhet, whom they denominate Turc, affords also another reason why we should pay them the compliment of precedence. The near relation we bear to each other unquestionably claims it. From Turc, however, they did not derive their present name ; it came to them from one of the sons
of

of Alanza Cawn, who divided his dominions between Tartar and Mongul, the two eldest; and hence the distinction of those nations, which hath ever since prevailed. The original designation of Tartary was Scythia; it then comprehended a vast variety of states: it may now be said to be partly independent, partly subject to China, and partly to Russia.

The inhabitants of this very extensive, and, in many places, very fertile country, have been, and still continue, the rude, but happy, children of nature. They chiefly derive subsistence from hunting, fishing, and the milk of their herds; they neglect agriculture, and wander about as we read of the first Patriarchs. Notwithstanding this unsettled way of life, they have a religion which consists in the belief of the one supreme God, and the tenets of it breathe some of the most sublime principles of morality. But what is still more extraordinary

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nary, they are guided in the articles of this faith by the hallowed decrees of a sovereign Pontiff, styled the Great Lama, who presides over more consciences than any other priest upon earth. The residence of the Great Lama is at Putali; his legates are scattered as their services are required; some are residentiary, and possess almost an equal degree of power with the Great Lama himself, such as the Dâla Lama of little Thibet or Boutân: they have the whole of the spiritual and secular power in their own hands.

An erroneous opinion very long prevailed, that the Grand Lama was never to be seen by strangers; late discoveries have proved the contrary: foreign ministers and travellers of distinction are always admitted to his presence. The divine character which is allowed him by his people, renders it politically right indeed to keep them from too critical an
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investi-

investigation of his actions and disposition : he rarely, therefore, exposes himself to the view of his subjects ; were he to do so, his mortality might be discovered, and the imposition of his never dying might be ascertained to be a trick. The ridiculous stories which have been circulated of the Great Lama are innumerable, and scarcely worthy of attention ; such as, that certain sacred matters, proceeding from him, are sold to his deluded followers at a most exorbitant price. The truth of this, I know, is universally believed ; but I doubt it ; it is too gross to deserve credit. Allowing, however, that the representation is just, cannot we match it ? I think we can ; no less than the holy St. Chrysostom affords the proof, and to him I appeal : does he not say, that “ it was common in his days to undertake dangerous voyages by sea, from the remotest parts of the earth, to visit Job’s dunghill in Arabia ;” and that those

“ those who undertook this pious journey,
 “ received from it infinite benefit and
 “ much philosophical instruction.” Is not
 this, think you, match sufficient for the
 Tartar? If Cashmin, Thibet, Mongalia,
 or Bochara can equal it, I will yield the
 point, and will most readily allow that
 the Grand Lama’s excrement is a drug
 of most inestimable value; and that to
 possess a little of it, a precious drop no
 bigger than a pea, no expence should be
 spared.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T XI.

THE character of immortal, assumed by the Grand Lama, is still heightened in estimation, by the attribute of omniscience which is vested in him *ex officio*; and he supports these prerogatives without the smallest inconvenience. When he dies, (for they do not suppose that the body always exists,) the soul, say they, flies into the frame of some handsome youth, who possesses certain marks which are known to the clergy only: thence turning the lad's own soul out of doors, the Lama's gets possession of its new habitation, and there remains, without disturbance, until such time as the inevitable decay of nature obliges it to change its quarters. The fact is, that children are always in training for this

holy purpose. Like David, a boy, is taken from tending his father's sheep, and being approved, he is anointed by the Lama, successor and ruler over the Tartar tribes.

The denomination of Kalmucks is given, without any sort of distinction, to the various tribes and communities of Tartars which fill the space between the Wolga and the wall of China. This proceeds from their great similitude of feature, language, and religion. The different Hordes, however, have different laws, and different municipal regulations; and, as naturally may be supposed in so prodigious an extent of country, and where the patriarchal way of life is still in its fullest vigour, the variations in their natures and dispositions, their manners and customs, as you approach to, or recede from, more civilized nations, is strikingly apparent.

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The wild Tartars live in tents; the more refined have houses upon wheels: these travelling habitations are far from being incommodious; they are raised upon a platform of wicker, carefully bound together; some of them are twenty, some thirty feet in length, calculated for all seasons; they are readily made, airy, or close and comfortable, as the state of the weather requires. The ladies (according to their undoubted title) have the most elegant equipages; their vehicles are costly, and as beautifully adorned as the little progress of the arts among them can give one reason to expect. The attendant carts are without number; so that in the train of a rich Tartar, you may frequently see hundreds of these enormous tenements. The dress of the Tartar is rich; in the hot months his garments are made of the finest manufactures of the East; and in the cold, his raiment is of the choicest

furs that can be procured from the north. The moral character of the Tartars, is, in general, good. The crimes of murder, treason, &c. are capital as with Europeans; and justice is administered among them with the strictest impartiality.

Although the Tartars wander about from place to place, they yet, at all times, contrive to carry a multitude of wives. Polygamy is allowed; but the first wife is always the principal. Contrary to the practice of most other nations, where a plurality of wives is admitted, the Tartars are above the mean refuge of a seraglio; they allow their women freedom and liberty; and this confidence is very seldom abused. The women are most faithful. Adultery is rarely heard of; and yet, (however singular it may appear) it is an universal and an established rule among this people, that the son, on the demise of
 I his

his father, shall have the optional choice of the widows, excluding indeed his own mother ; and those on whom he pitches are under the necessity of marrying him.

The situation of the women, however, taken altogether, cannot be very enviable. The words of Mr. Gibbon, in his elegant History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, are particularly descriptive of what a female of a civilized society would feel, were she unfortunately shackled to one of these roaming lords of the creation : “ A select band of the
 “ fairest maidens of China was annually
 “ devoted to the rude embraces of the Huns.
 “ The situation of these unhappy victims is
 “ described in the verses of a Chinese Princess, who laments that she had been condemned by her parents to a distant exile,
 “ under a barbarous husband ; who complains, that some milk was her only
 “ drink, raw flesh her only food ; a tent

“ her only palace; and who expresses, in a
 “ strain of pathetic simplicity, the natural
 “ wish that she was transformed into a
 “ bird, to fly back to her dear country;
 “ the object of her tender and perpetual
 “ regret.”

From the prodigious number of people which the regions of Scythia have sent forth, one would imagine that polygamy was beneficial to a community; and that no connection of the sexes could be more favourable to population. The fact, however, has been doubted, and apparently with good reason; for although a plurality of wives has been much more universally allowed than the simple state of monogamy, as will more fully appear hereafter, there yet seem to be natural as well as political considerations which speak forcibly against it. An equal proportion of the sexes is generally allowed to be the consequence of a man's being
 confined

confined to a single wife ; whereas, a great majority on the female side is observable in those countries where his appetites are unrestrained. Of this, both India and China, together with the nations of which we are now treating, afford sufficient proof. Among these people, the women far outnumber the men ; nor is the reason assigned, a bad one. It is observed by naturalists, that the offspring of every animal partakes in general of the sex of that parent which has the strongest and most vigorous constitution ; and that the women in India and China have less exhausted constitutions than the men, must readily be admitted. A variety of attraction must enervate even the most robust man. The seraglio, therefore, cannot but be hurtful to the male propagation. In support of this opinion, we find, that in Europe, where Polygamy is exploded, the proportion of males and females is nearly equal. I do not exactly recollect

the calculation; but I believe it is as 106 to 108. Europe, then, can boast of being in the truest and most eligible state of nature; for woman being formed for man, and nature not allowing of those adventitious claims of riches and distinction which first introduced a plurality of wives, the division, by her rules, should be as equal as possible; each should possess his mate, the poor as well as the wealthy. Moreover the monopoly of beauty is a monopoly of the most injurious kind; it is a robbery; it is a fraudulent selection of the loveliest and most valuable treasure that is given to man. Peace, happiness, and population, can only go hand in hand, while freedom reigns, and while there is a natural commixture of the sexes.

Polygamy, however, unfair and illiberal as it may be called, has yet the advantage, in every respect, of polyandry,
or

or a plurality of husbands ; this is, assuredly, not only a most unnatural, but a most abominable custom. Something may be said for a variety of wives, but that one woman should cohabit with a variety of men, is too gross to be dwelt upon. Happily for the preservation of our species, this custom at present is seldom found to prevail. Thibet, and the mountains of Affghanistan, are the only places that I know of where it continues to exist ; formerly, indeed, it was common. Media was so celebrated for it, that a woman was looked upon with contempt who had fewer husbands than five. Even Britain, the honest soil of Britain, some hundred years ago, produced females who would, without a blush, betroth their faith to a dozen boistrous fellows at a time.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XII.

AS if it were ordained that all should be upon the same scale, the empire of Tartary is bounded by dominions of the greatest extent in the known world: the Russian, the Mogul, and the Chinese. The Kontayfa, or more properly the Cawn Taishaw, is the supposed sovereign of all territories of the Kalmucks; it is he whom we style the Great Khan of Tartary. An army of an hundred thousand men is always in readiness to attend him to the field. It is a doubtful point if the Kalmucks ever were in a state of greater civilization than they appear at present. Nations unquestionably have had their declensions and renovations; the decadence of one hath, at all times, thrown the principles of grandeur into another,

another, and thus revolving, we all of us may have had our respective rises and falls, the records of which are not now in being.

Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,
Now green in youth, now with'ring on the ground;
Another race the following spring supplies,
They fall successive, and successive rise:
So generations in their course decay,
So flourish these, when those are past away.

ILIAD, b. vi. v. 183.

One thing is certain, that many of the plains of this country are strewed with monuments, whose age hath not been ascertained. The bits of wrought metals that are found in them, as well as the precious stones which have been dug up, are vouchers of a degree of civilization, and in some respects of the progress of the arts. However this may be, the Kalmucks, though not perfectly refined, are yet a hospitable, courteous, and well-meaning people; the wandering lives they

they lead prevent any extraordinary efforts of improvement. They are content with what they have, and are tenacious of their liberty ; what we call comfort and luxury, they call slavery and confinement. No argument can make them believe that man happy who is forced to continue in one spot. With their herds and flocks they travel about. Their whole property is of this nature: like unto Job, “ whose substance was seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household, so that this man was the greatest of all the men in the East.”

Notwithstanding this simplicity in the manners of the Tartars, a simplicity which one would suppose the parent of humanity, they yet have customs among them which are in a high degree barbarous and savage ; one in particular, is the exposing

exposing their sick and lame in small huts on the banks of rivers, where, with a little stock of provision, they leave them to perish, never afterwards giving themselves the trouble to enquire whether they are alive or dead. In this respect the Kalmucks exceed the wildest even of the Americans; for although in America an aged or an infirm parent or relation is put to death, that the burden of attendance and support may be got rid of, yet it is repugnant (agreeably to American feelings) to mercy and humanity, that those who are incapable of assisting themselves should at any time be deserted. They shorten their days indeed, but they do not suffer them to linger comfortless, in misery and in want. The peculiar disposition of the Americans, renders this act, which appears so shocking to us, humane and most merciful to them. Accustomed to the sight of such deeds, from the time they become capable of observation, the horror gradually

gradually decreases as they advance in years, till the decay of faculties, or the deprivation of bodily strength, makes it to them a matter of choice. They then call their kindred around them, and smiling on the friendly hand that meditates the blow, they chearfully resign themselves to that fate which they have always been accustomed to look to, as the inevitable, and the last and most meritorious act of their lives.

If barbarous, however, in the one custom of exposing the helpless, the Tartars are yet in others infinitely praise-worthy, and greatly to be respected. As I have already spoken of some, I shall here confine myself to the tenderness they shew to their women. In Tartary a woman is respected; she is treated as the object of affection and regard, not as in Europe formerly, nor according to the custom of many considerable countries in Asia, Africa,

rica,

rica, and America, even at this day, where indolence is the lot of man, and where the most laborious work is given to woman. The Tartars rear their females with kindness ; they do not humble them with harshness and cruelty ; and though necessity may compel all to be partakers in the common business of a clan, that which is given to women is always domestic, proportioned and suitable to their sex. This indicates liberality, and is a certain mark of refinement ; for nothing, surely, can be more savage than the ungenerous, the unmanly pretensions of superiority which is and has been assumed over weak but lovely woman.

Can any thing be more humiliating than the accounts given us by historians and travellers, of the vile occupations in which females in some countries have been employed ? The feeblest, the most delicate frame, enjoined the hardest, the most

most toilsome labour. How much is the situation of those women to be commiserated: doomed to the pangs, to the sufferings of bringing an ungrateful offspring into the world, and then to be employed in the most fervile and laborious offices for their accommodation: as if woman were formed for the basest end; for absolute servitude to man. Proud, arrogant assumption! The source of misery not only to woman, but to man himself. The forced subjection of a woman, occasions, indeed, an abject compliance with the will of her tyrant; but where is the kind look, the affectionate participation of the sentiments of the heart; the numberless blessings which attend the liberal; the refined connection of the sexes? In this, and in this state alone, is man to learn the value of the partner assigned to him by nature. Here he will find, that woman is the most admirable object of the creation; his thoughts will dwell upon

upon her with delight; he will cherish her in his bosom. The universe will be charming, only as relative to her. In short, here is man to know and to contemplate the full value of his felicity. In not assuming the authority to which he has no pretensions, but which has ungenerously been usurped, he here frees himself from that which would evermore be an insuperable obstacle to his happiness: he at the same time acquires the kind confidence, the anxious solicitude of a lovely companion, bound to him by gratitude, and by the most endearing ties of tenderness and affection.

When friendship full-exerts her softest power,
 Perfect esteem enlivened by desire
 Ineffable, and sympathy of soul;
 Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
 With boundless confidence; for nought but love
 Can answer love, and render bliss secure.

THOMSON.

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FRAGMENT XIII.

FROM Tartary we naturally pass into China. This country is of prodigious extent. It is bounded by India on the south, by Russian Tartary on the north, by the ocean on the east, and by Thibet on the west. The greatest part of the eastern extremity of the continent of Asia is comprehended within the dominion of China; besides which, Japan, the peninsula of Korea, Tonquin, Cochin China, Siam, and Pegu, were formerly subject to its authority. The government of China is monarchical. No sovereign in the world has more power than the Emperor of this country; and possibly no other potentate ever received such unbounded marks of veneration and attachment to his person. He is looked up to

as the parent of his people ; he is styled their common, their universal father.

In the domestic arrangement of this mighty family, in which every one bears a part, the Emperor himself is not excused. He is self-obliged to superintend a distinct department, formed purposely for the secret inspection of the affairs of the different provinces. In this wide circle of business, a deviation from regularity of system is observed by the Emperor, so that no district can possibly know the time when it shall come under the strict and severe examination of its sovereign. From this arises constant attention, and a cautious observance of the ordinances of the empire.

The municipal regulations of China are peculiarly adapted to the scrutinizing conduct of their government. Each province, district, and city, is directed to

keep registers of every material circumstance which occurs. These are divided into separate classes: in one is inserted the improvements in agriculture, manufactures, sciences, and arts; another contains the names, and the remarkable anecdotes in the lives of any celebrated persons who have either resided in, or been natives of the provinces: the third is the chronicle of political events. Thus from the history of his people, which is in this manner constantly before him, the Emperor is at all times prepared to apply whatever may be necessary in every, the very remotest, corner of his dominions; neither does he, while he keeps this watchful eye over the conduct of others, hinder the wholesome representations and remonstrances of his people from coming before him, whenever they feel themselves aggrieved. Absolute as he is, he yet is made to consider that he is mortal, liable to error, and therefore

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to be admonished. From this right in the subject to address the throne, innumerable blessings are derived to the Chinese ; the tyranny and avarice of distant magistrates are checked ; even the Emperor is told to proceed in the road prescribed to him by his own law ; and it is not unfrequent for him to promise amendment in his most public edicts.

Infinitely more superb than the monarchs of Europe, the magnificence of the Emperor of China is unparalleled. In this respect, indeed, he has forgot his Tartar origin, though in others he still perseveres in the customs of his forefathers. A fondness for the chace is still the prevailing disposition of the Emperors of China ; great part of the time that is unemployed in affairs of state, is given to hunting and the diversions of the field : for this purpose, as hath been the universal custom of those monarchs who have de-

scended from the Scythians, considerable tracts of country have been enclosed; and being designedly left uncultivated, are turned into forests for the royal recreation.

An infringement of this kind on the rights of a people, who are too numerous for the land they have to dwell on, and who are therefore compelled to live on the lakes and rivers, is greatly pernicious in an empire such as China. In any country, indeed, it is injurious; but in China particularly, where a genial climate, a happy inexperience of war, comparative to other nations, and an abundant fertility of soil, have caused a population which exceeds every account that is handed down to us by history. Beyond the enclosure of the imperial forests, however, I do not know that any other excesses of the prerogative bear hard upon the

the subject *. It is not enacted in China, that “ Every person whatever, without
 “ any reservation or distinction, as to the
 “ rank, quality, or fortune of the offen-
 “ der, killing or destroying any hare,
 “ pheasant, partridge, moor game, &c.
 “ or using any dog, gun, &c. for that
 “ purpose, shall, for the first offence, be
 “ imprisoned not less than three months;
 “ and either for the first, or any other
 “ offence, be once publicly whipped in
 “ the town where the jail or house of
 “ correction shall be, between the hours
 “ of twelve and one in the day.” No,
 the Chinese are too just to the common
 and unalterable privileges of nature, to
 admit of so scandalous an exertion of au-
 thority : it is left for a more enlightened
 people to trample thus shamefully on the

* In William the Conquerors time, killing a deer, a boar, or even a hare, was punished by the loss of the delinquent's eyes ; while the killing man was to be atoned for by a moderate fine.

natural rights of mankind. I blush while I write it, but England is the spot where a solemn act of the legislature, as just recited, is in force. It is disgraceful to the sovereign power; it is hostile to the freedom of those who exultingly style themselves the sons of liberty !

The Emperor of China, as I have already remarked, is denominated the father of his people ; nor is this an adulatory distinction. It is the fond appellation which hath been given to the sovereign from the foundation of their monarchy. At the first rise of this prodigious state, the parental form of authority seems that from which they took the idea of their government. The sovereign, as father over his children, possessed the absolute disposal of all dignities and honours ; no hereditary distinction was allowed. They never would admit that a certain species of men, unqualified,

qualified, perhaps, and even without pretension either to genius or ability, should be ushered into the world with pomp and ostentation; neither would they suffer them to move in a commanding sphere or exalted situation; they thought it baneful to society. They would have every man the author of his own nobility: it was the spring of emulation, the great moving principle of all those exertions which alone were entitled to pre-eminence. To acquire honours, therefore, and the system is the same to this day, was merely to acquire a life-possession. No distinction descended to the children of even the first in rank and consideration; the moral character, or superior abilities, could alone place a man in a conspicuous situation: “Deserve
“supremacy, and you will be exalted to
“command,” was, and is, the favourite maxim of this philosophic people.

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It is not, however, that the citizen is checked by the unflattering reflection, that he, and he only, is to derive advantage from his acquiring the honours of the state; a most extraordinary refinement of policy still leaves him a satisfaction, that to grateful minds must be almost as complete as if all titles and distinctions were to pass to the children, from one generation to another: this is the reflected radiance of honorary rewards. The son can ennoble the father, and throw the lustre of dignity on the manes of his ancestors.

I will not enter into the merits of this not unparalleled custom of the Chinese; I know it has its admirers. Hereditary distinctions are cried down as arbitrary and unjust; pre-eminence, it is said, is alone due to merit. I will not dispute the point; the espousers of this position are possibly right. They are supported
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on the grounds of the natural equality of mankind ; but a perfect equality has seldom been found to exist : if it has, it must have abounded in anarchy and confusion, and in every species of incon-
veniency.

However humiliating, it is nevertheless certain, that in some governments an hereditary nobility is of infinite service ; nay, that it is essential to the welfare and to the protection of the state. Even in absolute monarchies it cannot but be advantageous ; but in the aristocratical and mixed form, how peculiarly requisite is it to tranquillity and peace. Men must be ruled ; they never were ordained to wander in herds unrestricted and uncontrolled. Some hand must hold the reins, and that hand must guide the multitude under the influence and the sanction of their own laws. How often do we read of the daring influence of
fortunate

fortunate and aspiring leaders ; and of the impetuous torrent of royal power, which has only been withstood by the firm phalanx of an hereditary nobility ? This is to be gathered from the histories of all nations. Every people have found the bad policy of leaving the avenue unguarded, that would admit of even the shadow of destruction to their rights. As all, therefore, cannot be exalted, so experience hath pointed out the advantage of investing a certain number with a secondary sort power ; a power, which descending from father to son, necessarily establishes a control that carries in itself the most effectual barrier to the oppressive strides of tyranny and ambition.

That honours and distinctions frequently descend on unworthy objects, is certainly most true ; but there is surely every reason to expect that men, who through the channel of their fathers, have succeeded
to

to any dignities, will as fully and faithfully discharge their duties to the state, as those who have owed their exaltation to caprice, intrigue, or far less creditable means. Merit cannot be sought after in every corner of an extensive empire; neither are we to imagine that merit is at all times an object of choice with the sovereign. In a word, the descent of nobility, together with the means of fortune which it generally affords to its possessors, is unquestionably a paladium of consequence in a well-governed kingdom. Educated with ideas of property and independence, men of an elevated rank are naturally watchful over the encroachments of that power which is invested with the supreme and executive authority; nor will they, while they thus guard their own privileges, entirely forget that those of their inferiors are equally sacred, and equally well to be provided for, as any which, by better fortune,

fortune, they have derived from the loyalty, the good conduct, and the bravery of their ancestors: an hereditary nobility, therefore, while the road is still kept open for merit to arrive at honours, cannot but be beneficial.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XIV.

IN like manner as the Chinese, practically condemn the system of monopolizing secular distinction, so they as tenaciously combat all attempts at clerical usurpations. No civilized nation, perhaps, ever exhibited its priests in so contemptible a point of view; the pastor is of as little estimation as the lowest of his flock: whence this has proceeded, I will not presume to say; it is a singular trait in the character of this people. In other countries, when the tattered garb, and the sanctified deportment of the monk, have been often found to conceal the most violent ambition, and the most unbounded rapacity, strong measures have been taken against the pretensions of the clergy. They have been debased when they would

would have exalted themselves; but nothing of this kind has ever happened in China. The priesthood from the beginning hath been considered as insignificant; and, what is very remarkable, the Tartars, who hold the government, have guardedly refrained from instilling into the Chinese any of their own religious prejudices, or regard for them. Few offerings are made, and no tythes are granted to the Bonzes. They are not pampered as their neighbours, the Lamas; of some of whom Mr. Ides reports, that on a small hillock, on the borders of China, and on an old birch tree that grows there, the Lamas make the Mongolian and other Tartars hang either their purses, boots, breeches, or shirts; hovering round the spot, he says, as vultures, where the carrion lies.

The little consequence, indeed, in which the Chinese clergy are held, may have

have operated in some respects to the advantage of the state. It has prevented the influence of superstition (the destroyer of the peace of every country into which it hath entered) from exciting those disturbances which have uniformly been observed to erect a government of despotism. The Chinese tolerate every species of religion ; they make no man act in opposition to his judgement : they have a national form of worship, the ceremonials of which being observed, the scrutinizing eye of the church extends no farther.

In this respect the Chinese differ essentially, as we shall more fully observe hereafter, from the Hindoos, from whom, they say, they have derived the principles of their religion. Their dissent, however, is liberal, and they are therefore to be applauded for it.

The religion established in China, is founded on the moral aphorisms of their great philosopher, Confutsee, from whose writings (which he acknowledges to have gathered from the Bramins) the Chinese are generally said to have derived their best lights. The æra in which this amiable teacher of a truly mild doctrine appeared, was five hundred years antecedent to the birth of our Saviour: love and veneration have ever been ardently and voluntarily paid to his memory; his precepts are fondly cherished not only in China, but in other parts; they preserve his works as a most invaluable treasure. Honour and respect are not confined to the descendants of this great man; even the edifices which are dedicated to him are approached with reverence.*

From

* Thus was the memory of Pindar venerated by the Greeks. Alexander the Great, when he attacked the

From the pure impulse of virtue, and of unbounded regard to his fellow-creatures, Confutsee drew the essence of his doctrine; he never assumed the character of a prophet; he never pretended to the gift of inspiration; he supported his system by common reason, and by common means. “Reason,” said he, “is an emanation of the Divinity; the supreme law is nothing but the effect of nature and of reason; such religions as contradict these two guides of our existence, proceed not from heaven.”

The annals of the Chinese, which go a great way back, and with uncommon regularity, evidently prove, that from the earliest period of time, they have believed

the city of Thebes, gave express orders to his soldiers to spare the house and family of Pindar. The Lacedæmonians had manifested a similar attention before; for during the ravages of Bæotia, and when they had even burned the capital, these words were written, by order, on the poet's door: *Forbear to burn this house, it was the dwelling of Pindar.*

in the existence of one all-powerful, omnipresent God. Idolatry, indeed, apparently prevails among them : but what religion has been at all times exempt from idolatry ? Atheism is said to have spread itself through the greater part of China : how far this may be true I know not, nor how far the assertion of travellers may be credited, (but which they have probably borrowed from Socrates) that many of the Chinese will in mockery say of heaven and hell, “ Who, “ pray, hath come from thence, and “ who can describe to us the situation of “ these abodes ?” These expressions, possibly, may have proceeded from a Chinese, for a Chinese may be supposed to have reflected and reasoned as freely as a philosopher of Athens ; but I do not believe that atheism is prevalent in China ; it is too dreary, too mortifying an idea for a thinking people to adopt. Hear what the celebrated Emperor Kamhi said to

to the Missionary Fridelli, when, in the beginning of this century, that reverend father beseeched him to become Christian, “Why should I become Christian?” said he, “To the same God that the Christians “worship, do I and all my subjects pay our “adoration. This is sufficient. A change “of religion, in the sovereign of an em- “pire like mine, might occasion distur- “bances; and to prevent them is his “first and principal duty.” This does not impress us with the idea of an unbelieving race. Some of the Jesuits, however, have given them this character; and as very few, except those of the catholic persuasion, have had proper opportunities of detecting the misrepresentation, it is not astonishing that it has adhered to the Chinese in the manner it has done. But what would not vengeance and indignation dictate to that formidable society of Jesus? Their expulsion from China was held as an inex-

piable crime in the Emperor Yontchin. His words to the Missionaries on the occasion, and which we gather from their own *Lettres Edifiantes*, are worthy to be recorded: “What would you say,” said he, “if I were to send a number of
 “Bonzes and Lamas into your country;
 “how would you receive them? If you
 “have found means to impose upon my
 “father, Kamhi, do not think I will
 “suffer you to deceive me in the same
 “manner. You would have my Chinese
 “embrace your religion; now I very
 “well know that you will not permit
 “any worship different from your own:
 “what, then, must become of me and
 “my people? I am sensible that at present we have nothing to fear; but when
 “your vessels shall find their way hither
 “by thousands, times of trouble and distraction may ensue.” If this was not sufficient asperision for an anathema, even an Ernulphus’s curse, the Jesuits
 never

never had provocation given them in any of their various persecutions*. Suffice it then, with respect to the religion of the Chinese, that they believe in the unity of God, though they worship him through the medium of idols; and that the residue of their creed consists in a due obedience to the laws of their country, and a most perfect and implicit respect and veneration for those unto whom they are indebted for their being.

* I must here once for all beg that I may not be misunderstood in the following pages: I mean no disrespect in any thing I may say to that most respectable body the clergy; no man feels more veneration for them than I do. I know them to be greatly essential in society; and I feel them most justly entitled (excluded as they are from all lucrative professions, for the sake of the rest of mankind) to the comfortable conveniencies and enjoyments of life, and those at the expence of the community, for whose benefit they forego the usual means of providing them. I level simply at clerical chicane and usurpation, and no truly Christian divine will, I am sure, condemn me for it.

FRAGMENT XV.

WE have already taken notice of the provincial registers of the Chinese; besides which, they have another very useful custom of inserting in the imperial books, the date of the day and year in which every male child is born. By this precaution, the strength of the kingdom can at all times be collectively and separately understood. It affords the means likewise of the taxes being easily gathered in, and of levying them under such equitable regulations, as that one district shall not be under the pressure of a greater burden than the other. The general tax is capitation; from the age of eighteen, a man is obliged to pay a stipulated quota of his property; should he arrive to the age of eighty

eighty it then ceases, and he, in his turn, becomes a pensioner of the state. Old age, they say, should always be provided for : the services of younger days are to be requited in a more advanced state of life by kindneses and comfort.

One great and original cause of all that reputation for wisdom and sagacity which the Chinese have acquired, may be justly ascribed to the uncommon attention which is paid to education. Exclusive of a knowledge of the doctrines of Confutsee and of the established principles of government, they are reared with the strictest regard to politeness, and to the little minutiae of attention and good manners ; points of infinitely more importance than is generally imagined. The grand part of the Chinese discipline, however, after the qualifications useful to the citizen are acquired, is in the study and knowledge of their language ; this is attained
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with infinite difficulty: it requires the application of a man's life. The sister arts of poetry and music, indeed, do not seem to have arrived at any degree of refinement in this country: the one, we are told, is devoid of imagery and fire; the other is certainly harsh and dissonant, devoid of melody, and of the simplest modulation of sound.

Though essentially different from the character either of the Greeks or Romans, the Chinese are as fond of athletic games as were those celebrated nations. They do not, however, carry their inclination for such sports to the same barbarous and bloody excess: wrestlers throw each other; combatants encounter with lances, cudgels, quarter staves, battle axes, &c. but they never are permitted to murder each other for the amusement of the spectators. In plays and pageants they have likewise considerable

able diversion ; in short, all exhibitions in China appear as if purposely calculated to dazzle the multitude, and to inspire them with good humour and satisfaction both as to their situation and government.

When the less civilized Tartars established a dominion over this country, they presently perceived the superiority of manners and customs in their new subjects : this induced them to adopt, at once, the whole system of political and domestic regulation. Instead of compelling the Chinese to tread in the steps of their conquerors, they wisely gave them the lead, and were content to learn from the Chinese themselves the way of preserving that power which effeminacy and irresolution, and not radical defects in government, had compelled them to surrender. The only change the Tartars introduced, was in filling the offices of state ;

state; here they took especial care that no Chinese should continue in employ without a coadjutor. Leaving the Chinese, therefore, in the respective departments they had filled, previous to the invasion, they only checked them from undue practices, by joining with them Tartars, invested with an equal degree of authority; this was not only liberal but politic. The Chinese, above all nations of the East, had been celebrated for extraordinary caution in the choice of their magistrates: the study required as a necessary qualification for an employment of state, was immense; neither could any man be admitted into an office who had not previously undergone the most severe examination, and who had not in consequence arrived at the dignity of one of the literati. The vast extent of this country, the amazing number of its inhabitants, and the distance of many of the provincial governments from the seat of empire, rendered, indeed,

indeed, a careful selection highly expedient and necessary.

In China, the delegation of absolute authority is excessive; it runs from the Emperor to the most insignificant mandarin, in a strong and copious stream. The viceroys may be said to be little kings, supreme and uncontrollable in their governments; and yet, notwithstanding all this omnipotence of the Emperor and his substitutes, the Chinese have the certain indications of a contented and satisfied people. Even the inferior orders are well fed and cloathed, and boast that they are, what I verily believe them to be, the happiest race on earth; it is observable in their temper and disposition. The general intercourse of society is kept up amongst them with the utmost politeness: they are seldom out of temper, and they are both separately and collectively

lectively possessed of great benevolence and hospitality.

This account, I am sensible, is different from that which is handed down to us by a certain class of travellers and voyage writers ; but because a few knaveries have been detected in the most considerable sea-port town of China, and because the exclusion of strangers from the courts of justice has prevented the aggrieved from acquiring that immediate redress to which they were entitled, is it equitable that the whole nation should be involved in an indiscriminate condemnation ? Europeans should look at home before they speak decisively : the first trading town in China is not the only one in the world where rogueries are practised, not merely on strangers, but coolly and deliberately by one citizen on the other.

The

The Missionaries, who from their knowledge in science, and their holy calling, and the ministers of foreign courts with their suites, who have been admitted freely into China, have represented the Chinese in exactly the same light in which they have appeared to me; but that which most firmly riveted me in the opinion, was the account which I received from a native of Cashmiere, who in the garb and style of an itinerant merchant of China, had, for ten years, uninterruptedly, been travelling from one extremity of the empire to the other. His voice was loud in their praise: he had never been defrauded, he said, of the most inconsiderable sum. As to oppression, he had been a stranger to it; wherever his fancy led him he went; thieves and assassins, never infested his way; his road he had always found a road of safety; and the people, good humoured and obliging on every occasion, had given him
cause

cause to be thankful, that he had found a residence among them. The Chinese have unquestionably been misrepresented; at the same time, that they have possibly been too glaringly extolled: their true character may lie between the two extremes.

From the first arrival of Europeans in China, the government, with infinite good sense, has prevented their entering into the internal parts of the country, and from forming colonies, which might give room for apprehension. A few sketches which had been given them of the manners and customs of the Portuguese and Dutch, at a very early period, made them see the good policy of confining trafficking strangers to limited factories. Hindostan, and the Malay shores, had presented them with melancholy instances of what was to be expected, should a free entrance be allowed to those seemingly

ingly harmless and inoffensive merchants; they therefore sagely took the line of exclusion: they still keep to it with rigor and pertinacity; nor will they deviate, unless compelled or driven to it by necessity.

Thus debarred from the view of what is passing in the provinces of China, it is from report alone that we can form any idea of their municipal regulations: some of them have already been transiently adverted to; one or two more are all that remain to come within the scope of our investigation. From the great extent of the dominion of China, the necessity of sure and speedy modes of circulating the orders of government was very early seen and provided for: post houses for that purpose, long before they were known in Europe, were erected throughout the empire; but lest the dispatch by such communication should be inadequate

to the emergency, they fell upon another method peculiar to themselves, but every way answerable to the purpose. This was the erection of lofty pagodas, or places of worship, at the distance of every eight or ten miles ; from the tops of which, by fires and other lights, the alarm, or the necessary orders on urgent occasions, are spread through every division of the empire, and in a space of time inconceivably short.

Their most provident, and most to be admired regulation, however, and which continues in force to this day, is the law which ordained the annual stocking of the public granaries : every district is obliged to build so many of those grain depositories as are proportionate to its number of inhabitants ; these are always kept full, lest a scarcity should arise from droughts, or any other accidental causes.

If

If the harvest is plentiful, and the ensuing crops promise abundance, or even a sufficiency, the grain that is on hand is disposed of at a moderate, but stated, price, and a new supply is gathered in; but if, on the other hand, a bad season, or any other unfavourable circumstance, give reason to apprehend that want may be felt by the indigent, the government then opens the gates of mercy to the poor, and feeds them at its own expence. No reflections are required on so charitable a practice; it speaks for itself: I can only wish that so salutary, so humane a precaution, to guard against the necessities of those who have not the means of being provident themselves, were taken in all countries, subject to European authority, where famine has too often spread her baneful and pestilential wings. Need I say, I look now to the Eastern Indies? England should there advert to the bene-

volent institutes of Ackbar, who feelingly thought of, and provided against the calamities and miseries of the lower orders of his people.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T XVI.

Notwithstanding the parental care of the Chinese government, in establishing such salutary regulations for the well-being of the poor, the miseries of want are severely felt in China, and that not unfrequently: whole districts are sometimes laid desolate by famine; nay, so apprehensive are these people of a failure in their crops of rice, the staple grain of their country, that the inhuman custom, it is said, obtains in several parts of exposing children. I know not if this be true; I can scarcely give credit to it. It is well known that the Chinese are, of all people, the fondest of their children; why then are we to suppose that a dread of future scarcity should so far operate, as to make them

unnaturally desert their offspring, and that too in the helpless state of infancy, when their utmost wants could drain nothing from the public stock? Charity inclines us to hope that this stigma on the Chinese character is wholly devoid of truth: I never heard of it when among them, and yet I was particular in my enquiries about it.

The calamity of famine, indeed, in China is horrid beyond description. Millions are swept away by it; nor does it fail in general to draw along with it its sister curses, pestilence and plague. To avert these scourges of mankind, every species of art and industry is universally exerted; nothing is left undone that can possibly promise plenty in the provinces. From the highest to the lowest, the business of cultivation is attended to; all are farmers; all are to exist by the plentiful harvest of the field. They even
pro-

profusely bribe the images of their God, and by every kind of pageantry and procession, endeavour to awake in him a consideration of the nature and extent of their necessities : every season is seen to exhibit shews to this effect.

In forming a judgement of the Chinese disposition, one might unwittingly be led to think, that a circumstance of this complection indicated superstition, and a considerable degree of influence in the Chinese clergy ; but the fact is, as we have already instanced, decidedly the reverse. The Chinese have as little superstition, and what is a necessary consequence, as little reliance on their ghostly fathers, as any people on earth ; nothing of this kind proceeds from the church. The government alone is the propounder of all heavenly supplications ; and it is so ordered, that the necessity and love of agriculture may be constantly kept alive in the minds

of all, the first officer of state as well as the labourer and husbandman.

How different the principle on which this custom is grounded, to that of many of the senseless pageants heretofore so prevalent in those European countries, where the empire of China was denominated the empire of idolaters. An inscription upon a church of Imprunata in Italy, ran to this effect :
 “ The sacred image of the Madona being
 “ carried with solemn pomp into Flo-
 “ rence, when it was visited by a pesti-
 “ lence for three years successively, and
 “ received with pious zeal by the Great
 “ Duke Ferdinand II. and the whole body
 “ of the people who came out to meet it,
 “ and having marched about the city for
 “ three days in procession, the fierceness
 “ of the pestilence began miraculously to
 “ abate, and soon after entirely ceased.”

The

The Chinese, more wise than the Italians, labour while they pray : their usual supplications are for rain and favourable seasons ; while they are at the same time careful that superstitious idleness shall no way impede the important business of agriculture *. Their acquaintance with the effects of gunpowder, and with the attractive qualities of the magnet,

* The Chinese do not admit the influence of authority to degrade their reason : they tolerate shews, and the pageantry of religion ; and that, as well from the good which they are sensible results from them, as from their usage, from time immemorial, but no farther. The Chinese, however addicted to a tenacious veneration for old customs, are yet a wise people. They may be supposed (though I deny the fact) obstinately trammelled in the ways of their forefathers ; and hence, it may be said, the reason why the arts and sciences have arrived at so inconsiderable a degree of improvement among them. But I aver it, the Chinese are an ingenious, and I repeat it, a wise people ; and this can be proved from their being acquainted with almost every branch of knowledge held in repute by other nations. For this knowledge they are not, like Europeans, indebted to the ancients or to emulative rivalry ; they find it among themselves.

long

long before either was understood in Europe, is also a convincing argument of their being an inquisitive and an investigating people.

The useful, I will allow, has been in general the favourite study of the Chinese; but the ornamental has not, in consequence, been utterly neglected. When we view them as astronomers, it must be confessed, they appear in an indifferent light: mere satellites to those glorious luminaries which have arisen in the western world; but if they have made no mighty progress in the science of the heavenly bodies, they have the celebrated names of Greece and of Rome to keep them in countenance. If we consider them in regard to painting and sculpture, those arts will appear with them (as with the Indians and Egyptians) still in their infancy; neither do they exhibit any extraordinary proficiency in the art military;
this

this may arise from their want of ambition, their domestic and peaceable propensities, which render them happy in the possession of what they find within themselves. In lieu of all these, however, they can boast of a perfection in essentials, equal, if not superior, to any which are now to be met with, or which are to be found even in the records of history.

Provident and careful, the attention of the Chinese to the cultivation of their land is, as we have already mentioned, prodigious; no contempt is thrown upon the peasant or the husbandman; no discouraging supremacy is arrogated by the pampered, luxurious citizen, over the honest labourer of the field, who cheerfully sings as he scatters blessings for the human race. In a word, agriculture is encouraged and honoured, as the first and most natural occupation of man.

But, from the fields, when the means of subsistence are provided, turn but your eyes to the crowded towns and villages, which in smiling comfort and affluence cover the face of the empire: look to the manufactures of these towns; observe the stupendous canals, which, at an immense expence, have been carried through the empire, for the purpose of internal trade; mark the patience and universal industry which pervades the general character: these are the points of view in which the Chinese must be taken. Let them be thus viewed, and they will be found rightfully to possess that estimation, which will ever insure the respect and the truest veneration of unprejudiced men.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T XVII.

I HAVE already said, but it may not be amiss to repeat it, that parental affection, a punctual discharge of obligations to the state, and an universal attention to agriculture, are some of the most striking features in the Chinese character. So necessary, indeed, so incumbent is it on them to preserve this character, that the Emperor, as father of his people, and even his delegates in the provinces, constantly hold themselves out as examples to the inferior classes of the community. The Emperor annually exhibits, in the more public act of agriculture, an awful ceremony; where, to shew that he is nothing more than man, mere man, who must be fed by industry and labour, he
clears,

clears, breaks up the ground, and sows the first seed of the approaching harvest.

In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
The Kings and awful fathers of mankind:
And some, compar'd with whom, your insect-tribes
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scale of empire, rul'd the storm
Of mighty war; then, with unwearied hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seiz'd
The plough, and greatly independent liv'd.

THOMSON.

Thus, likewise, do we read of the Incas of Peru; though descended from the sun, they yet knew that the favour of their God would exist no longer than while labour and industry gave them a claim to his animating influence. The spring, therefore, shewed them to their subjects in the act of cultivating a field near Cuzco: they denominated it, indeed, their triumph over the earth; but the wholesome example which it was meant to set, was only thus politically dignified with

with an appellation which strengthened their pretensions to a heavenly descent.

In the more abstruse and speculative arts, we have already said that the Chinese have, through a long succession of ages, scarcely arrived at a moderate degree of perfection; neither in physic have they made that proficiency, at which, from a knowledge of anatomy, practitioners in other countries have been enabled to arrive. Physic is in its infancy in China; and it must continue in that state, until by a thorough enquiry into the nature of the human frame, they may be able to determine as to the proximate causes of distempers. The theory and practice of the medical art, therefore, is confined to the simplest prescriptions*. We are told by a traveller into this coun-

* The physicians of the Greeks and Romans acted chiefly in the capacity of nurses: they went very little beyond aliment in their prescriptions.

try,

try, that a stone which is generally ten cubits high, is erected in a public square in every city, and that on this stone are engraved the names of all sorts of medicines, and their exact prices. The truth of this I will not pretend to affirm; it has something extravagant on the face of it. Should it, however, be the case, it surely had its rise in goodness, and is humanely meant to answer the most salutary purposes.

In reviewing the customs of various nations, I cannot help adverting to the sanction which in every country is given to empirics : a sanction of the most pernicious tendency, since every ignorant or pretending coxcomb is thereby enabled to trifle with the health, and even lives of our fellow creatures. To cheat a man of his property is felony in every civilized society ; and shall health, perhaps existence, be less dear to mankind than transitory property?

perty? Let patents be sold; let officers of state be benefited by the sale; but, in merciful consideration to those who know no better, let not pernicious nostrums be vended; let not experiments be tried upon the human race: the idea is horrid; it is repugnant to every sentiment of humanity. Is mourning, and all the wretched train of griefs, to be carried into an helpless family (for the rich can always have the best advice) that a few advantages may be derived to one, or to a particular set of men? And is the royal licence to be stamped on such heart-rending calamities? Why, why will you not, ye rulers of kingdoms, why will you not interpose your authority, and save your people from destruction! Why will you not rather grant rewards for all discoveries in the healing art, and then promulgate them for the benefit of mankind, than suffer the sale of drugs, the very composition of which

is unknown! Physicians of benevolence and candour (and ye are many) I do not here reflect upon the profession, or the professors of your art; I would strike only at that evil which each of you would banish, if in your power, from the communities of which you bear a part. It is a scandal to the name of medicine; it is the principal cause of that odium and reproach with which you are indiscriminately and unjustly loaded.

The physician in China prepares and administers his own medicines: this is a wholesome custom; it in general prevents the imposition of old, decayed, and consequently pernicious drugs. The man of feeling, whose credit is at stake, will, while thus acting in a double capacity, be careful that his patients are furnished with what alone can be of service to them. No clearings of shops; no connivances with apothecaries; no admix-
tures

tures of ingredients, possibly deprived of their power of operation, or baneful from their age, or other accidental causes. Here he will portion his means to his ends ; and what is not unworthy of consideration, here he will keep free of those fatal mistakes which frequently occur from the ignorance of men employed in the preparation of medicines, and from their deficiency in all professional information. “ Ye call them apothecaries,” says Quevedo, “ but instead of that, I
“ prithee call them armourers, and their
“ shops arsenals. Are not their me-
“ dicines as certain death as swords or
“ daggers, while their patients are purged
“ and blooded into the other world, with-
“ out any regard either to the distemper,
“ measure, or season.”

FRAGMENT XVIII.

AGreeably to the computation of the Jesuits, China should contain about sixty millions of inhabitants; and conformably to the belief of the Chinese themselves, the foundation of their empire should go as far back into the reign of chaos and old night as eighty or ninety thousand years: thus, you see, there is a mighty number to support a mighty age; but old as it may appear, I have yet an elder branch of the family to introduce you to in proper season; wherefore, out of compliment to those who lay claim to primogeniture, I shall refrain from any chronological discussion for the present.

The ancient Chinese, if accounts be true, were averse to foreign traffic: they

neither traded themselves, nor encouraged strangers to visit their ports. What vast abundance, therefore, must their country have produced, to have fed and cloathed such an immensity of people; nor at this hour, when foreign commerce is tolerated in China, have this industrious people any real need of trade with any other country. That which they purchase of imports, they purchase merely from curiosity, such as ingenious pieces of mechanism, clocks, watches, trinkets, and toys: viewed in this light, the Chinese are certainly the most independent people on earth. They want nothing but what they find within themselves; but where is another nation to be found which is not necessarily obliged to encourage external, as well as internal traffic? And which, even then, is more than upon an equality in essentials, with these highly-favoured Asiatics. The silks, satins, teas, wares, in short, the

variety of materials which the Chinese markets furnish, are prodigious: they formerly, too, afforded considerable quantities of gold; but the precious metals are now getting into a degree of estimation, which renders their reflux somewhat difficult. I make use of the word reflux, as the greatest part of the gold and silver which is in use in China, has been poured into it from other countries.

Not but that she has mines of her own; but the fundamental laws of the state, it is believed, are adverse to the working of them. The general circulation of gold and silver, say these ordinances, would unavoidably occasion disorder. We have every thing that nature can desire; money could yield us neither farther means of subsistence, nor even increase of happiness: those who possess it in greatest profusion, exhibit the most unequi-

unequivocal proofs of distress. We will be content with the industry which hath hitherto been our never-failing wealth. It will be time enough to open mines when we can no longer do without them.

Happy had it been for Spain, and thrice happy for the wretched inhabitants of the new world, had a like forbearance operated in the councils of Madrid, a century or two ago: avarice would not then have set sail with a merciless thirst of riches; nor would bigotry and bloody superstition have followed the abhorred partakers of her spoil.

China, indeed, would have less to fear than the poor inhabitants of Mexico or Peru, were she to produce the treasures she possesses; but still she would have reason to apprehend the prodigiously increasing strength and consequence of cer-

tain envious nations, particularly Russia. Nothing but a river forms the boundary of the two empires. While she continues, therefore, the object of admiration more than of rapacity, she may, perhaps, promise herself safety: it will be her own fault if the continuance of that tranquillity and repose, which she has so long enjoyed, be at any time interrupted.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XIX.

FROM a jealousy of the growing power of the Russians has arisen, it is probable, the suppression of the internal traffic which was carried on from Moscow to Pekin: the precaution, as it respects the eventual interests of the Chinese, is unquestionably a good one; but in fact it is nothing more than a renewal of the pre-established maxim of their government, of guardedly excluding all strangers from too free an entrance into their country; and yet they must have admitted, in former days, of a much greater latitude to strangers. This is evident, from the accounts handed down to us by the Hindoos, the Mohammedans, the Catholic Christians and the Jews: Judaism
even

even at this day is to be found in China.

The common opinion relative to the introduction of the Jewish system of religion, and I mention it as a curious circumstance, is, that about 900 years after the coming of our Saviour, a colony of travelling Israelites hit upon the direct road into this land of plenty, this second land flowing with milk and honey ; and as they always carried with them a disposition of manifesting their principles, they lost no time in communicating to the Chinese the doctrine of Moses ; instructing all who would embrace the faith in a knowledge of the Hebrew language, and initiating them into the mysteries of the chosen of the land of Israel. From this stock the elect increased, in so much, that in several parts of the empire the Jesuits found Judaism to have taken such root, that notwithstanding
perfe-

persecution, there were still remaining, and not many years ago, those who could read the original text of the Pentateuch, and who could also expound it with considerable erudition.

This account, I know, this straying of the flock, is combated by learned writers: they say that the journey into China must have happened at least three centuries before the Christian æra; and they support the assertion by affirming, that the Ten-ki of the Chinese are neither more nor less than the ten generations which preceded Noah. Nor do they stop here; they still proceed to declare, that even admitting the improbability of this their patriarchal tour, the knowledge of the law of Moses must have found its way into China long before the period I have mentioned. The Chaldeans, they say, were acquainted with them; and who more likely than the Chaldeans to penetrate into China, and
with

with them some Jews who undertook to promulgate the doctrine of Moses? Be this, however, as it may, strangers, as I have already said, must have had freer admission into this country in former days than they have at present.

In the rude sketches which we have already given of the Chinese, we have glanced upon the few objects which we have found necessary to bring within the purpose of our inquiry. The administration of justice, indeed, has escaped us; a word or two on that head, therefore, may be necessary: the Chinese, perhaps, of all people in the world, are the least sanguinary; their aversion to the shedding of blood is almost incredible. Murder, and acts of high treason are alone punishable with death; so that it has been computed, and it is imagined with great exactitude, that ten criminals are not executed one year with another in China.

China. What a merciful example to mankind! The whole globe cannot afford us such another; ten out of fifty or sixty millions! One century alone in England, and that too the sixteenth, saw seventy-two thousand miserable wretches brought to condign punishment.

The courts of law in China, if we are to believe their historians, are most carefully watched over: the seats of justice are almost always ably filled, from a distinct order of Mandarines, who are of the highest dignity; and the administration of the true spirit of coercive authority, is no where more attended to. Bankrupts alone, I think, are treated with any degree of severity; and that is only when they endeavour to defraud their creditors by concealing their effects: in every other respect they are gently dealt with. In this country, a poor broken-hearted man is never torn from his family and thrust
into

into prison : the reverse ; he is assisted ; he is encouraged in every exertion that can be supposed capable of improving his fortunes. Would to heaven so bright an example were followed by the world in general ! Debtors should surely, in most instances, be looked upon with an eye of indulgence. From what innumerable accidents, from what unexpected fluctuations in the course of human events, does insolvency often, and most innocently proceed : to bankruptcy, therefore, we should not annex the idea of guilt ; it is too cruel that opprobrium and inhuman treatment should be added to distress.

Authority! unfeeling power,
 Whose iron heart can coldly doom
 The debtor, drag'd from pleasure's bower,
 To sicken in the dungeon's gloom!
 O might thy terror-striking call
 Profusion's sons alone enthrall!
 But thou canst want with guilt confound,
 Thy bonds the man of virtuous toil surround,
 Driven by malicious fate within thy dreary bound.

HAYLEY.

The

The favourable impression which I would wish to give of the Chinese jurisprudence, will, I am well convinced, be considerably weakened by the evidence of many who have been in that country; nor are they altogether wrong; for strangers aggrieved, deprived of their property, and denied the protection of the law, no doubt have reason to complain of the ordinances of the country in which they sojourn; and particularly in China, where honesty and fair dealing is most peculiarly expected. But the principal grievance of the trader resident in China is, the difficulty of getting a complaint lodged before the magistrate, or any of the tribunals of justice. Confined to the suburbs of the town, strangers are denied all access to the courts in person; nor will the offer of any bribe or reward to even the lowest citizen, induce him to present a petition against his fellow countryman. When we consider this, therefore, and

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when

when we reflect that a ready control is among all people eminently necessary, we shall rather be surpris'd at the good faith which is generally found among the Chinese, than at the comparatively few fraudulent practices which are detected. The Chinese government, however, is aware of the inconveniencies which eventually may result to strangers, from this difficulty of recurring, with ease, to the laws of the country ; and they have guarded against it in a manner the most simple and efficacious. They license a certain number of merchants for the business of traffic with foreigners ; their names are made public, and for their equitable conduct government itself becomes responsible. By this means, commerce is carried on in general with a perfect reliance on, and confidence in, those with whom such authority is placed ; which confidence is very seldom abused.

When

When strangers, indeed, indiscriminately entrust themselves to men whom they are previously warned against, they must unavoidably suffer. Fraud and imposition will be experienced in every commercial town : in a word, I have every reason to be strongly grounded in opinion, that the laws and regulations of China are both merciful and wise. The provinces shew that they are so ; and the provinces, or rather the inhabitants of the provinces, being the constituent parts of which the nation is composed, from them the judgement is to be formed, and not from the interested conduct of a large town where a different principle pervades, and where a different spirit animates, the body of the people.

F R A G M E N T XX.

THE Chinese, who are singular and characteristic in every point of view in which they can be taken, are most peculiarly so in all domestic regulations. The excessive veneration which they pay to their parents, does not cease when those parents are no more: it is continued to their memories while their children live. The custom of burying, or burning, at the proper season after death, which prevails in other countries, is held in abomination by the Chinese. They do not bury their dead until a full year after the decease; during this time the body is kept in a coffin, carefully lacquered, that no air may have entrance, and in that manner is placed in the most elegant apartment of the house, where it is solemnly complimented

plimented every day. How they keep the body from the effects of putrefaction, is difficult to discover; they do not embalm, although the preparation they make use of proves equally good, as a preservative. At the end of the year the deceased is removed with the utmost demonstrations of grief and lamentation, and lodged in a vault on the side of some sanctified hill where it is regularly honoured with an annual festival: after this, the mourning is continued in the most rigid manner for two years.

“That which thou sowest is not
 “ quickened unless it die:” I passed over marriage, therefore, until the aged were interred. I now come to the connubial connection which subsists in China: polygamy is allowed, and seclusion from the sight of any other men except those of their nearest kindred, is the lot of the
 M 2 ladies;

ladies ; accident, however, sometimes throws them into observation.

The general countenance of the Chinese, I think, is far from pleasing ; the flatness of the face, and the smallness of the eyes render it deficient in expression. The pernicious practice of painting, and that too of an inanimate white, which universally rages among the females, is also more than disagreeable to one who is unfashionably content with nature in her simplest charms ; but what I think particularly disgusting, is the cruel and illiberal custom of binding the feet of the women : this is a most inhuman practice, and must have had its origin in mean and selfish jealousy. At their births, the tender limbs of those unhappy creatures are swathed from the toe to almost the knee, and thus compressed into the size in which they are always meant to be continued ; the feet are put
either

either into iron or wooden shoes, so that the foot of a full grown woman is no larger than an infant's.

To compensate in some degree for these natural and artificial imperfections, the Chinese ladies are attentive to and elegant in their dress: their hair, which is universally black, is neatly braided, and fancifully ornamented with artificial flowers, pearls, &c. Unmarried women comb the front part of their hair carelessly over the forehead, so that a spinster is immediately distinguished from a matron; such are the Chinese females in externals. Of their education and mental qualifications I am not sufficiently informed to speak.

In a preceding Fragment, we have said, that the Tartars, on their conquest, immediately adopted the manners and customs of the Chinese: the treatment of

the ladies, however, was an exception which we should have noticed. Freedom, and a more generous way of thinking, had taught the Tartars to look upon their females in a more amiable, and a more respectable light. They spurned the idea of an inhuman confinement, which should entail pain and a deprivation of limbs on one half, and that the loveliest of the human species. Cherishing, therefore, the wise system of their ancestors, they continued to their wives and daughters the same unfettered liberty which they possessed in their Scythian fields.

Having thus related all that I have been able to gather, touching the general character of the Chinese, I shall hasten to a conclusion. It is a common, and a very just remark, that no nation is behindhand with another in self-importance and arrogant pretensions; this is peculiarly conspicuous in the Chinese.

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Unquestionably the dominion which they possess is a fine one, perhaps the finest in the world : they are not, however, satisfied with this, they will also be the wisest, the most puissant, and the most formidable ; but here they are mistaken. They have sagacity, it is true ; but valour, and all the hardy masculine propensities of the soul they are strangers to. Indolence and effeminacy are their most striking features.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXI.

A SPANIARD once said, "It was lucky
" that Satan, when he tempted our Savi-
" our in the wilderness, forgot to shew
" him Spain, as Jesus certainly could not
" have withstood that temptation." How
much more reason would a Chinese have
to make this boast. The general opinion
which has prevailed among the learned
of Europe relative to China is, that it
was peopled from Egypt. Absurd as
you may suppose this hypothesis, it yet
has been supported with all the tenacity,
and with all the zeal of system-working
genius. Animals, fishes, birds of every
denomination, are every where to be met
with; but man, poor man, is never to
be found indigenous. Strange that ability
should be exerted to establish such extra-
vagrant

vagant and arbitrary positions. Ask you whence came the people of India? The answer is ready for you in a moment, from Egypt. Whence came the people of China? From Egypt. Whence those of America? Why from Egypt to be sure. Do not smile, Egypt is, seriously speaking, the declared parent of almost all colonization. The step to America, therefore, was nothing; it could not, indeed, be conveniently accounted for in a direct line. Collateral branches, however, were not wanting, and those were made use of. The Chinese, the lineal descendants of a strong party from Egypt, were placed in the front ground: from them issued multitudes who peopled the innumerable islands that lie scattered around their empire. From these again sprang the inhabitants of Otaheite, the Society Isles, and others. Voyages, shipwrecks, &c. served the purposes on the southern shores of America, while the
northern

northern extremity of Asia, peopled from the same source, admitted of a descent (for the journey was nothing through Siberia) of a formidable body into the land, now possessed by the Esquimaux. In short, Egypt has been dignified with the appellation of the general nursery of mankind, and China, the prodigious empire of China, is allowed to be one of her first-born.

As children, then, of this celebrated people, it is not surprising that in certain matters their taste should be the same, and that they should delight, as we shall find their progenitors did, more in the massive and enormous, than in the elegant and superb. The most remarkable instance of this taste in the Chinese, is in the immense wall which runs from the bay of Nankin across rivers, and the tops of the highest mountains, for the distance of 1400 miles, until it ends
in

in inaccessible deserts. The learned suppose this wall to be the wall mentioned by the ancients as the rampart of Gog and Magog; and Ezekiel is directed by the Lord “to set his face against Gog, “the land of Magog, the Chief Priest “of Mesheck and Tubal.” This wondrous monument of industry, intended originally (though it failed of its purpose) for keeping off the Tartars, is still in high preservation. The height of it is determined by the nature of the ground; in some parts, such as where it is continued over mountains, it is not more than eighteen or twenty feet; in others thirty feet in breadth, and in the disposition of the towers which are erected on it, it is generally uniform and regular, twenty feet the breadth, and about a quarter of a mile the space between the buildings. The time employed in this amazing work, the most extraordinary of which

which we have any tradition, was scarcely six years.

Besides this wall, we are told by the Jesuits, of mountains cut with vast labour and expence, into the figures of tygers, lions, dragons, &c. Father Martini, especially, mentions a stupendous hill shaped into a statue of such prodigious size, that its nose and ears are to be discovered at the distance of several miles. Here, then, we shall take our leave of China and the Chinese, just observing, that their first subjection to the Tartar arms by Zingis Cawn, was in the year of Christ 1232, and of the higeira 630: that an undisputed possession of the throne was kept by the successors of Zingis Cawn for about ninety years, when the then successor was expelled from it by the general suffrage of the nation; and that they did not regain possession until the 1644th year of our Christian æra.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T XXII.

LEAVING China, we proceed to Japan: the empire of Japan, as far as a knowledge of its history has reached us, is of high antiquity. From its insular situation, and from its vicinity to China, one would naturally suppose its first inhabitants might have come from thence; but this is not admitted. Travellers who have visited Japan, at least some of them, are of opinion, that at the dispersion of those under the weight of whose presumption the land of Shenaâr groaned, a nimble tribe, more active and more enterprising than the rest, forced a long march to the confines of China, and thence crossed to the islands of Japan; islands but little tempting to appearance, and constantly subject to volcanoes and
the

the most tempestuous storms. Here, however, it is said, a colony of the builders of Babel came, and from them arose an empire of no inconsiderable importance in the annals of the eastern world.

The government of Japan is vested in one person, styled the Daïro, who is both sovereign and chief priest, and, as in all other countries where the people are greatly addicted to superstition, the earthly and heavenly character assumed by this royal pontiff, has acquired him the most unlimited obedience, and the most devoted attachment to his sacred person: such was formerly the situation of the Daïro. Whether it has lowered in its consequence, I will not pretend to say; writers go so far as to affirm, it was usual to pay divine honours to the Daïro even whilst living; an adulation, though not greater than that of the Romans,

mans, in some period of their story, yet infinitely more extravagant than all the nonsense of the Tartars with their Lama and his immortality.

But even this, in the opinion of the Japanese, was inadequate to what was due to their Daïro. It was not sufficient that he should have a heavenly rank; the perfection of his nature rendered it likewise indispensable that he should be exempted from the suspicion of delighting in earthly gratifications. Hence the Daïro, for the preservation of the mummary of state, was compelled to relinquish almost every kind of recreation and amusement. As a descendant of the gods, his feet were never to touch the ground: as their immediate representative, he could not receive any obligation; and of course, though shivering, perhaps, with cold, and when the chearing influence of the sun would be most agreeable, he was precluded

cluded the benefit of a ray of that exhilarating luminary.

What the Daïro gave up in comfort, however, (and much of what has been said of him you will readily believe fictitious) he gained in that flatulent species of praise which gratifies vanity. His people worshipped him; the morning always saw him seated on his throne, where, with eyes fixed and an immovable position of body, he continued for hours together, shewing his subjects, by an emblem of such sublimity, that repose was alone procured to the state by the stillness of the sovereign of the world.

The extremes to which it is possible to seduce the mind of man is unaccountable; nothing so false, but what may be imposed upon the credulous. It is not our purpose, or I could easily reconcile this senseless farce of the Japanese pontiff
with

with a thousand equally ridiculous instances, from the theological records of other nations; but the time would be mis-spent. I shall content myself, therefore, with merely reminding you of the arrogance of our own priests in the younger days of christianity. Not a volume of the first fathers but teems with absurdity and holy presumption; none of them went indeed so far as to lay claim to immortality, or to this character of the Daïro, which was virtually no higher than that of a heavenly automaton; but all of them previously insisted on unbounded pre-eminence and infallible supremacy. “It is execrable that holy hands,” says Urban, “appointed to perform what was “ never granted to any angel, to create “ God the creator, and offer him to God “ the Father for the salvation of man- “ kind, should be reduced to the humili- “ liating baseness of slavishly mingling “ with profane hands, which, besides

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“ being foiled with rapine and blood-shed,
 “ are day and night employed in impure
 “ offices and obscene contacts.”

The Japanefe, however, ridiculous as was the homage they paid to their Dairo, (for I do not aver that they continue the practice ftill) were yet influenced in a great degree, to a difcharge of the moral duties of fociety, by the principles which it was eftablifhed that he fhould inculcate, and, by the hope and perfuafion, which it was his duty to teach and cherish, of the immortality of the foul. This was a prevailing doctrine among the Japanefe ; it afforded them comfort ; they contemplated it with ardor, and, confequently, conformed themfelves to a ftict obfervance of all arts of focial kindnefs, beneficence, and good will.

Sectaries, indeed, as in every religion upon earth, fprung up among them ; and they

they carried the phrenzy of enthusiasm to the greatest excess. The most to be pitied, however, of all who seceded from the established church, were those, who scorning the blessings of life, and preaching up austerities and mortification, blindly threw away what at the moment they could have enjoyed, for the ideal prospect of a something in futurity, which fancy, and fancy only could depicture. Of this latter sect, bearing some affinity with the Carthusian, were their stoutest warriors. An uniform contempt of life, rendered them indifferent to death. They held the extinction of the vital spark as a matter of no regret; they even, like the stoics, prided themselves in anticipating the hand of fate.

It is not within the nature of my design that we should always confine ourselves to a set mode of inquiry, or that we should always investigate or criticise

minutely. With the Japanefe, therefore, I fhall be brief: the only judgement I can form of them, is from the accounts which have been publifhed, and which are in every body's hands. Thefe make them, in the eye of impartial reafon, an intelligent, fagacious, generous, and humane people; well acquainted with the principles of liberty, and nourifhing the moft fond regard to it, from a conviction of its value. Quick in their difpofition to revenge, but forbearing, liberal, and candid, when not roused by injury; fenfible of the charms of fociety, and refined in their manners, customs, and intercourfe with the world. Such was the ftate in which Japan was found when vifited firft by Europeans: what it is now I will not pretend to fay.

The reigning family of Japan, it is faid, afcended the throne about the year of Chrift 660; for ages it continued in

tran-

tranquility. Many convulsions, however, and civil wars, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, are known to have shaken the empire. It was discovered by the Portuguese in the year 1542, and it was then involved in all the horrors of civil dissention.

FRAGMENT XXIII.

THE Portuguese discovered the islands of Japan. Misfortune first threw them on those tempestuous shores; but hospitality and kindness gave them a generous and a permanent establishment. Ignorant of the pretensions of the Portuguese, and uninformed of the property which those voyagers claimed in every country of the East, the Japanese harboured no suspicion of them. They allowed them to erect factories; their Missionaries to make converts; and their commerce to spread with every species of immunity. Little did they know that they fostered a snake in their bosoms, which would one day requite them with treachery and bloodshed.

Situatèd

Situated at the distance of many thousand leagues, and having the greatest part of the habitable globe between them, it never could have occurred to the Japanese, that a priest of Rome should have the folly or presumption to think of disposing of a dominion unknown to the people of the West; or that he should say to the sovereign of his own hemisphere, “I give the countries in the eastern extremities of Asia to a prince of the Catholic house of Portugal.” The idea would have been too mad for the veriest visionary that ever played with the imagination; and yet this solemn investiture, unknown to the miserable, devoted inhabitants themselves, was made by Alexander VI. in a bull which he issued anno. 1493. To Spain, in the plenitude of his power, he granted the sovereignty of the West, and to Portugal the sovereignty of the East. He even authorised them “with the aid of the

“divine mercy” to subjugate, and bring into the bosom of the holy Catholic communion, the numerous people that dwelt in those extensive regions.

This arrogant exertion of clerical usurpation, this palpable deviation from that self-denial and humility which was bequeathed to all priests by our Saviour in his testament; this, I do not know what to call it, this impudence in the head of the Christian church, founded on a passage of the Septuagint, as cited by St. Austin, “To the faithful man belongs a whole world of riches; to the infidel or unfaithful, not even a farthing,” was surely the most extraordinary that ever yet entered into the brain of man; it is scarcely to be credited, but so it was. The Christian world submitted to it, and the favoured potentates possessed themselves, by force or treachery, of this sacred

cred gift ; a gift derived to them immediately from God !

The Japanese, ignorant of this holy donation of Alexander VI. with extended arms, welcomed the unfortunate strangers to their shores, and cherished them as if they had been their brethren ; but this felicity was not to be of long continuance, it soon was to have a check. It is not essential that we should enquire into all the particulars of the Portuguese establishment in Japan, it is sufficient that their abode was made both comfortable and advantageous to them ; and that they were increasing in affluence and consequence when the Dutch, smarting with the wounds inflicted on their countrymen by the merciless hand of Alva, appeared in the seas of Asia.

Wrought up to phrensy at the unexpiated blood of their fellow-citizens,
thirsting

thirsting for revenge, and stimulated by an intolerance almost equal to that of their persecutors, the Dutch threw off all restraint of mercy with the Portuguese, the newly-become subjects of Philip II. of Spain : every part of the East became witness of this sanguinary struggle*.

It is not fair, nor is it consistent with historic truth, although it has been confidently asserted, that the persecution of the Catholics, which afterwards ensued in Japan, should be attributed to the intrigues and the misrepresentations of the Dutch. Much mismanagement, every one must confess, was evident on the part of the Portuguese. The most glaring, and probably the most destructive, was the intemperate zeal of the fathers of the church.

* Japan unfortunately exhibited it, in its most awful colours.

To interfere with the interests of priests can never be allowed with impunity ; the Portuguese Missionaries should have known this, but instead of temperance and humility, they manifested dangerous dispositions towards intolerance and absolute exaltation. The Bonzes saw it and murmured, but the Christian pastors still continued to grasp ; complaints, then became common. The evil, however, still gained ground : nothing was heard but reciprocal invective and reproach. In short, from avidity on the one side, and apprehension on the other, the contest was soon brought to an issue. Every one took his line ; no man could be neuter. Sovereign and all became involved. In a word, Japan against Japan, revenged the religious quarrels of Europeans.

Religious disputes have never yet been terminated without a dreadful effusion of blood ; this was the case in the present instance.

instance. The Emperor, at first indifferent and unsuspecting, allowed the differences of opinion which subsisted between the Portuguese and his own subjects, stimulated by the Dutch, to take their course. He resolved on caution and forbearance; and as he tolerated every sort of worship, so he conceived it of importance to refrain from every sort of interference. Matters, however, could not continue long in such a situation; decision at length became necessary. The Emperor saw it, and reluctantly took up arms against the Portuguese, whom he conceived to be the aggressors.

The issue of the struggle so unequally matched, and so peculiarly circumstanced, was most tragical. Sixty thousand Christians perished either in the field, or by the hand of the executioner. No follower of the sacred standard of the cross remained to tell the story. The whole

whole body of the Catholics was extirpated ; every vestige of christianity was abolished ; and the re-introduction of it prohibited under the most dreadful penalties. Thus did the day set, whose dawn had been so propitious to the children of Portugal.

A contradiction of what I have now said, may, indeed, appear, in the intercourse which is kept up with Japan by the Dutch ; but in fact there is no contradiction, if the matter be properly considered. The Dutch know the execration in which the name of Christian has, is, and always must be held by the Japanese ; and as their views are turned solely to commercial purposes, and to the acquisition of wealth, they do not allow themselves the privilege of excesses on the score of religion. They even go so far, it is alledged, as to deny the first principles of their faith ; and as a writer
of

of their own nation says, if a Japanese asks a native of the United Provinces of what belief he is, he readily replies, “ I “ am no Christian ; I am a Dutchman.”

I have already said, that the striking features of the Japanese character are those of hospitality and good humour. This is evident from the accounts given us by travellers of all nations ; the English in particular, and they at one time had an opportunity of studying them. The English are warm in their praise of the Japanese. The only fault they found while the Dutch permitted them to reside at Japan, was in the uniform prohibition of the introduction of ecclesiastics ; but even in this they confess the Japanese were not to be blamed. However illiberal, they at first conceived the precaution ; they afterwards had reason to acknowledge them defensible, if not commendable, in shutting their hospitable

pitiable doors, when the opening of them would, in their apprehension, be probably requited with a second entrance of bloody zeal, and murderous infatuation.

No people under Heaven, if we except South America, and I mean not to give offence, have had such reason to curse Christians and Christianity, as the Japanese. “Your King,” said the Emperor to an Englishman who was suing for permission to erect a factory for the purpose of traffic, “your King* has married the
 “daughter of the King of Portugal,
 “whose subjects have filled my dominion
 “with horror and desolation. The ser-
 “vants of your master may be as cruel,
 “perhaps, as those they are willing to
 “succeed. No trade, therefore, shall be
 “carried on between you and the sub-
 “jects of Japan. Go, return to your

* Charles II.

country,

“ country, where, at a distance, I can only
“ hear of the name of Christian. That
“ which you may stand in need of shall be
“ supplied you. I wish you well. I would
“ I could say more ; but the blood which
“ has been already spilt shews me how
“ cautious I should be in admitting Chris-
“ tians into a land which will have cause
“ to execrate them so long as Japan has a
“ son to mourn.”

Nothing farther occurs to me on the subject of Japan, excepting the mention of its having been subjected at different periods to the dominion of China ; and that it once, and nearly with success, attempted, in return, to reduce the Chinese to a similar situation. The peninsula of Korea, was to afford the Japanese an entrance into the Chinese territories. The scheme, however, failed, from the singular heroism of a Korean nobleman, who seeing inevitable ruin, should the Japanese succeed,

succeed, generously resolved upon sacrificing his own life to the liberties of his country. The method he adopted was that of poison ; he first drank of it himself, infused in wine, and then presented it to the Japanese Emperor, on whom alone the fate of the expedition, he knew, was to depend, and who had intrusted him with the secret. The Emperor followed the example of the Korean ; he drank the poison. The effects soon declared themselves ; both expired in the most excruciating agonies.

A treacherous deprivation of life, whatever good may result from it, is surely unmanly, and must evermore be condemned. Many Machiavelian arguments, it is true, are used in vindication of it. Brutus has been held out ; Brutus has been immortalized for stabbing his patron and his friend ; but no arguments can

sanctify an atrocious deed. Sophistry may, to some, reconcile an act which in itself may be essentially ungenerous and base ; but an honest mind will shudder at even patriotic assassination. There are, however, degrees of palliation. The conduct of the Korean may be entitled to one of them. He certainly sacrificed himself ; and in so doing, in great measure wiped off the stain which would otherwise, in my mind, have stamped his name with indelible disgrace. To his memory, therefore, we will allow all the praise that is given to it by his grateful countrymen. Annual festivals are celebrated to his honour. Hymns are sung to perpetuate his generous regard to the liberties of his country. “ Twine around
“ his tomb, ye never-fading laurels ; ye
“ nymphs and swains of Korea, scatter the
“ grave of this your hero with the sweetest
“ flowrets of the spring ; and you, ye
“ guardians

“ guardians and protectors of your coun-
 “ try, resound forth his name, that his
 “ memory may live for ever :” thus sing
 the youths and maidens of Korea.

F R A G M E N T XXIV.

WE have mentioned Tonquin as having formerly made a part of the extensive dominion of China. It is now independent, and has been so for many centuries. To the east it touches China; to the west it is confined by the kingdom of the Burmans; to the north again by China, and to the south by the Gulph of Cochin China. The climate of Tonquin is, in general, serene and temperate. The whole country is intersected with rivers, the most inestimable blessing in the torrid zone. A constant verdure covers the face of the earth; so that SPRING, one would suppose, had established here her seat of empire.

We

We have very little satisfactory information relative to Tonquin ; it lies out of the general track of European navigators. That which hath come to our knowledge, however, gives us reason to conclude that the Tonquinese are an honest, and a candid nation. The people are represented as industrious ; the soil as abundantly fruitful ; and the form of government somewhat of the same complexion with that of China. In one respect, indeed, the disposition of the Tonquinese seems to differ from that of the natives of China. The Tonquinese are warlike ; personal courage is held in high estimation with them. They are fond of arms ; and, they say, they are so, because arms enabled them to shake off the yoke of China, and gloriously to preserve their independence.

In almost every country where the military profession is, as necessity says it

should be, the first in rank and consideration, the soldiery are the peculiar care of the state. Their pay is, or at least always should be, adequate to their wants; and they should meet with those indulgencies, to which, from the dangers and hazards they encounter, they are well entitled. But in Tonquin a very different system is seen to prevail; the profession of a soldier, though highly honourable, scarcely affords him means for subsistence. He is not allowed (although his country should be in peace with all the world) to descend from the dignity of the military character; neither is he permitted (though not on duty) to engage in any kind of traffic or employment by which he might advance his fortune. This refinement of the Tonquinese is vain-glorious and unjust. Those who defend their country, are certainly entitled to a proper support from that country; but should that not be granted them, they at least should not
be

be prevented, when not interfering with other more important duties, from acquitting, by some civil occupation, a moderate provision for themselves and families. Industry should never be discouraged.

The King, the nobles, and the people of Tonquin, exhibit, at this day, a striking representation of the state of society in most European countries a very few ages ago, and of which there are some remains at this moment: I mean the prevalence, with all its inconveniencies, of the feudal form of government. The King, as first in power and situation, rules, in general, with absolute authority; but the nobles control and counteract him whenever they see occasion. They again, in their turn, are kept in order by the sovereign power, while the people, sinking under the double pressure, naturally fall into a state

of vassalage, degrading and pernicious to society :—an ordinance of the kingdom even establishing a three-months personal servitude to the Crown in all the inferior subjects of the realm, and a farther three months to the nobles : so that the middling sort of people, the most numerous class of the community, have only six months of the year wherein they can call themselves free and independent.

It would be useless here to enter into a discussion of this system of government, or of the many similar systems which are to be met with in the annals of the various nations of the earth. I cannot, however, refrain from remarking, that partial slavery, such as prevails in Tonquin, bad as it is, is certainly a proof of much more civilization, than that of complete vassalage, which ran throughout all Europe, and which was, in some degree, unexploded even among Britons so late as the reign

reign of Queen Elizabeth ; for the year 1574 produced an order from that Princess for the manumission of certain of her bondmen.

The Russians, even to this day, adhere to personal and hereditary slavery. The peasants of an estate are sold with the estate itself, and are calculated in its valuation as the heads of black or any other cattle. What a degradation ! But, alas, there are still more horrid exhibitions of vassallage to be met with among the children of the western world ! Why does Europe afford me the ready means of giving examples of this nature ; examples which blur the face of charity and benevolence ? Europe, the seat of kindness, compassion, and generosity !

But so it is, Europe affords the means : she presents the merciless contracts called assiento ; the inhuman channels whereby

avarice accumulates riches by the barter of the race of man. I am aware of the necessity that is pleaded for this abominable traffic; but how can I reflect on the excruciating agony which we ourselves should feel on the loss of a son, daughter, friend, or brother, though even in the ordinary course of nature; and at the same time not be conscious that the children of Africa are born with as exquisite a degree of sensibility? That the bitterness of anguish can rend their souls as much as it can ours; and that incessant labour and perpetual slavery cannot but bend them to the earth with an excess of misery, which must cry aloud to Heaven!

The first barbarous contract for this galling servitude of the human species, was made between France and Spain; the former engaged to drag the unhappy wretches from their native shores; the latter

latter to receive them annually into South America: thirty-eight thousand males and females, during the course of the war which then raged in Europe; and forty-eight thousand when peace should be re-established. This contract was afterwards transferred to the English by a formal treaty in the reign of Queen Anne, the first article of which stipulated, that in a certain number of years, one hundred and forty-four thousand souls should be transported to America, to replace the natural inhabitants who had met with destruction at the hands of their conquerors the Spaniards.

But slavery was not all; other evils were entailed by this *asiento*, such as unhealthiness of climate, through which these miserable creatures were to pass; unwholesome food; the working of mines to which they were destined, where pestilential damps and vapours constantly prevailed;

prevailed ; all these were the consequence of the execution of the contract, so that in a word, the estimate was made, that not one in three survived the heart-rending afflictions of the year. What, what shall we say to this ? Can the thought be dwelt on, and the tear not start from the eye of humanity ? O shame, that no other corner of the world can exhibit spectacles so unfeeling as the polished dominions of Europe ! That Europeans should sink so infinitely beneath what they ought to be ! Europeans who boast so much of freedom and generosity ; so much of the attention which should be paid to the laws of nature ; to the laws which bind and regulate communities and states !

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FRAGMENT XXV.

OUR last digression led us a little too far ; we will now return to the people of Tonquin. The deportment of the Tonquinefe is grave, modest, and polite. They are humane and courteous. In general they are followers of the doctrine of Confutsee, whose memory, as we have already remarked, they hold in the highest veneration. The transmigration of souls is an essential article of their belief. Their whole system of religion, indeed, is considerably refined, and in fact much more inculcated and better observed than that of the Chinese ; and that may be one efficient cause why the Bonzes or priests of Tonquin possess a character more respectable in itself, and more amply provided for, than

than that of their brethren of China. Tavernier says, the offerings made to the gods of Tonquin, through the medium of the clergy, especially on the accession of a monarch to the throne, are incredible; in one article alone, (that of animals) he tells us of an hundred thousand which were given by a sovereign, in order that his reign might be prosperous.

This deviation from the frugal, though prudent line, so strictly adhered to by the Chinese, shews that superstition has already made some progress in Tonquin. The days of exorbitant riches and prosperity in the priesthood, are always remarked to be the days of bigotry and infatuation in the laity. Mansell, the domestic chaplain of your third Harry, possessed seven hundred livings at one time; and you know no period of time, nor country, nor people, ever could exhibit stronger symptoms of distempered imagi-

imagination than you did at that æra, about the middle of the thirteenth century*.

* In England the clergy, increasing in wealth, power, honour, and interest, began soon to set up for themselves; and that which they obtained through favour of the civil government, they claimed as their inherent right, indefeasible, and *jure divino*: founding their exemption on the text of scripture, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Hence the comprehensive criterion was established, that every one who could *read* (a mark of great learning in those days of ignorance and superstition) being accounted a clerk or *clericus*, was admitted to the *privilegium clericale*, or *benefit of clergy*. But this is no longer the case. We may collect from it, however, as the first law authorities expound, that though in such times, that monster in true policy, of a body of men residing in the bowels of a state though independent of its laws, may for a while subsist; yet when learning and rational religion have a little enlightened the minds of men, society cannot any longer endure so gross an absurdity, an absurdity which must destroy its very fundamentals. For by the original contract of government, the price of protection by the united force of individuals, is that of obedience to the united will of the community. This united will is declared in the laws of the land; and that united force is exerted in their due and universal execution.

The

The discipline of the Tonquinese youth, and the course of studies necessarily required for those who aim at offices of state, are nearly the same as those among the Chinese. Law and Physic, with the abstruser sciences, are equally well cultivated, so that they in no respect yield the palm to their former masters.

A plurality of wives is tolerated in Tonquin, and that under harsher circumstances, with respect to the women, than even in China; for the men assume the privilege of repudiating their wives whenever they are weary of them, nor will they allow their wives to avail themselves of a similar prerogative. The Tonquinese, indeed, are not singular in this ungenerous treatment of women; the laws of Moses expressly speak in favour of it. “When a man hath taken a
“ wife, and married her, and it come to
“ pass

“ pass that she find no favour in his eyes,
 “ then let him write her a bill of di-
 “ vorcement, and give it in her hand,
 “ and send her out of his house.” Thus
 we see the chosen of the land of Israel
 may be, if they are so inclined, to the
 full as hard-hearted and ungallant as the
 Tonquinese.

Exclusive of the unlimited number of
 wives, admitted by the Tonquinese cus-
 tom of polygamy, the most unbounded li-
 cense is likewise granted the men in their
 promiscuous commerce with the fair sex;
 whence arise other sources of misery. In
 short, nothing can exceed the wretched-
 ness of the women of Tonquin. Subject
 to all the tyranny and capriciousness of
 masters, not of husbands; doomed to
 eternal confinement, solitude and pain;
 the objects of love one moment, of dis-
 grace at another; and compelled to silence
 and resignation, at the infidelity of those

whose affections they alone should possess,
and yet they themselves adjudged, if guilty
of a similar transgression, to the most
horrid and ignominious death!

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXVI.

THE Tonquinese, who, like the people of China, delight in shews, have yet some that are, perhaps, more rational and more conducive to the welfare of society, than any that are to be met with among that celebrated people. I shall content myself with mentioning one ; and I select it, because I do not recollect it to be paralleled by any other nation. It is this : At the commencement of every year, a solemn festival is held, in a plain adjacent to the capital of Tonquin, at which the King and all the nobles of his court attend. Scattered up and down this plain are temporary altars, on which are inscribed the names of the warriors and other great characters to whose memories they are dedicated. For several

ſucceſſive days, theſe altars are adorned with all the ſplendor of religious pomp, while conſtant ſacrifices are piously offered on them. The hour then comes when the gratitude of the people manifeſts itſelf in awfully commemorating the acts of their benefactors, their wiſdom, and their labours. This ended, the ſovereign approaches the altars with the utmoſt humility and reſpect. At each he makes a ſtand; recounts the actions of the hero or the ſtateſman who is ſuppoſed to ſleep beneath it; from former deeds draws emulative concluſions; recommends their toils as examples worthy of imitation; bleſſes their memories; and then joins in prayer and ſupplication to the gods who preſide over merit, and who reward the exertions of the patriot and the good citizen.

We now take our departure from Tonquin, and ſtop for a moment in Cochinchina

chin-China, separated from it by a river that serves as the boundary of the two kingdoms. The reigning family of this country, and indeed almost all the nobles, are descendants of the Tonquinese; but they did not establish themselves by conquest. During the times of civil distraction in their own country, they sought an asylum among the rude, but kind, aborigines of Cochin-China. The reception they met with was hospitable; the Cochin-Chinese embraced them as beings of a superior order; they gave them territory; they gave them power; they gave them every thing they stood in need of. In short, in the course of a few years, they allowed them so firmly to rivet themselves both in strength and consequence, that they readily acquired an obedience in the natives, and an approbation of such form of government as they found it convenient to establish.

Something like a natural equality took place. The democratic, with a very few checks, was determined on, as fishing, hunting, and agriculture, were the sole employments of the Cochin-Chinese. A considerable degree of refinement, however, having been introduced by the Tonquinese, a taste for society gradually insinuated itself into the breasts of the rude, but honest, natives: hence sprang industry and every species of improvement. Commerce even began to flourish; the neighbouring nations encouraged it; and the Cochin-Chinese, having the means in profusion, soon came into the habit and spirit of commercial dealings.

If we are to believe the accounts of travellers, the hospitality and the simplicity of this people some years ago were scarcely to be paralleled. No jealousy of strangers; no apprehension of evil designs from those whom they were
happy

happy to receive and look upon as friends.
“He who comes among us, said they,
“and generously confides in our good
“faith, is one whom we should love,
“and for whom we should feel both gra-
“titude and respect.” But this state, I
fear, this type of the golden age, is ra-
pid in its decline. Late navigators tell
us, that a Prince, no longer a common
father of his people, now reigns over the
Cochin-Chiniese with all the splendour of
an arbitrary potentate. The seeds of ty-
rannical government are universally scat-
tered; and it is to be apprehended, from
all appearance, that the time is not
very distant, when the chearful sun-
shine of that happy liberty which they
have hitherto enjoyed, shall be obscured
for ever.

FRAGMENT XXVII.

FROM Cochin-China, were it within the limits of our enquiry, we should proceed to Cambodia, Siam, Pegu, and the coasts of Aracan, and there dwell a little on the laws, the customs, and the religion of each people. But in fact the manners and customs of the inhabitants of these very extensive regions are so very little known, and the anarchy in which their governments have invariably been found, hath been so effectually a bar to investigation, that we shall find ourselves under the hard necessity of leaving this blank to be filled up by some future writer on the subject of the East. For a moment, however, we will place ourselves, as it were, in the center of them all. The view will be but transitory:
it

it will, however, enable us to speak of their existence, and then we are free to continue our way.

The exact geographical description of these countries is very immaterial. It may be sufficient to remark, that from the borders of Cochin-China, they continue in a regular chain (the peninsula of Melacca excepted) to the confines of Bengal. They there meet the rocks and deserts of Asiatic Tartary, and there they terminate.

Similar in features, complexion, and disposition, the natives of these kingdoms appear as one and the same people; bold, uncivilized, and treacherous; masters of a soil in the utmost degree fruitful, yet yielding little, from indolence and inattention; intrepid sons of rapine, and slaves to every kind of tyranny and superstition. In short, from what I have
either

either seen, heard, or read of these people, they are utterly unworthy of notice; and yet how dreadful that it should be so! No country in the world is more favourably situated, or more abundantly capable of yielding every thing for the use and conveniency of man. Nature there pours forth her treasures in almost wanton profusion. Thus circumstanced, with a population, however, comparatively inconsiderable, the major parts of these beautiful shores are left uncultivated and waste. That which should be the residence of men, is permitted to continue the lurking place of the most noxious reptiles. Nay, not even Africk herself can produce more destructive animals of every species, and of every denomination.

With this imperfect glance at the coasts of Aracan, &c. I should, perhaps, conclude the subject; but I find myself
unex-

unexpectedly stopped by the recollection of a circumstance which the mention of these countries hath often brought under our discussion ; a circumstance far beyond the reach of reason ; far beyond the comprehension of the deepest, the most enlightened researchers into the arcana of nature. I mean that rank in the animated system of the world, in which we can place the Ouran-Outang, or man of the woods, whose species is so common throughout this division of the East. I do not know how to explain to you the nature or the disposition of this creature ; both the one and the other amaze me. I cannot discriminate his propensities, though I am greatly desirous of doing so, however humiliating the knowledge might turn out, and however declarative it might be found of the individual imbecility of man.

The

The description of the Ouran-Outang, as given us by an able anatomist, is to this effect : the Ouran-Outang, as well as all animals of the monkey class, are furnished with hands instead of paws ; their ears, eyes, eye-lids, lips, and breasts, are like those of mankind ; their internal conformation also bears some distant likeness, and they discover some faint efforts at intellectual sagacity. The Ouran-Outang, indeed, of all others, approaches nearest to the human race ; it has been seen from three to seven feet high ; it is covered with hair rather of the human than of the brute kind. The tongue, and all the organs of the voice are the same, and yet it wants speech ; the brain is formed in the same manner, and yet it wants reason. It is patient, pliant, imitative, and melancholy, as if conscious of a fallen state.

Such

Such is the Ouran-Outang, as it appears on examination. St. Jerom, indeed, differs somewhat in the account he gives of the man of the woods. “ St. Anthony,” says he, “ a hermit, once
 “ travelling through the deserts of Egypt,
 “ espied a Satyr approaching towards him,
 “ or a little man, with goats feet, a
 “ crooked nose, and a forehead armed
 “ with horns, and being asked by St.
 “ Anthony what he was, gave this answer: I am a mortal, and one of those
 “ inhabitants of the desert whom the
 “ deluded Gentiles worship, under the
 “ names of Fauns, Satyrs, and Incubi,
 “ and am now deputed as ambassador to
 “ beg your prayers and intercessions for
 “ us.” Now, whether, with St. Jerom, (but St. Jerom, I believe, was no naturalist) we may credit the story of this holy anchorite, or whether it be more consonant to sound sense, to concur in the received opinion, that all men of the woods are
 animals

animals of a distinct species, I will not pretend to say. I have already declared myself unequal to the decision.

That invifible chain which links all animated nature ; that inſcrutable deſtiny which forms, combines, and exiſts perhaps in maſſes, the moſt inert to our perceptions ; that all-ſeeing Providence which watches over all, that, and that alone, can diſcern where one ſpecies ends, and where another is to begin. When in the ſearch of knowledge, man obſerves the claſs of zoophytes or vegetable nature, that theſe inſects have life, motion, and yet can be propagated by diſſection : when he ſees the amphibious tribes of animals, the cetaceous claſs of fiſhes, ſuch as the whale, who with the internal conformation of a quadruped, has warm red blood which circulates ; parts of generation ſimilar to thoſe of a terrene animal, and lungs which compel it to emerge for
the

the freedom of respiration. When man sees this, and when he likewise can discover that even plants have a circulation of juices, through vessels as nicely and carefully disposed, as those of many of the stationary objects which are classed as animate; and that when deprived of the active principle of nature, a free and liberal supply of air, these very plants sicken, droop, and perish, as we should ourselves in a similar situation: when these, with a vast variety of other such phenomena, are daily open to our contemplation, where are we to stop, or on what are we to determine?

Human curiosity, indeed, is great; but human curiosity never can be satisfied. We would know all things, and yet how ignorant are we of even the commonest properties of nature! The causes which impel one body to act upon another, which fix on the mind those impressions
from

from the external appearance of things, which we call thought, and which ultimately producing will, excites corporeal motion : of these we are entirely ignorant. How becoming, therefore, would it be to drop the pride of arrogant assumption, and hypothetical singularity ! The little knowledge we have should teach us to be modest.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXVIII.

IN a former fragment, I slightly touched upon the several general distinctions of the human species. I then asserted, that the scale was in some degree defective; and I am warranted in such assertion, from the accounts which have been given us of some late discoveries. It is extraordinary, and not very flattering to human pride, that the chain may be fancifully traced, from man in his perfect state, to man in a fallen situation, such as that of the Ouran-Outang may be imagined to be, and which we have just mentioned. I say fancifully traced, for I would not wish to be understood as believing, that monkies and men are of the same species. The gradation, however, is curious; we run them close, and closer indeed than many a fine gentleman

would wish, if a fine gentleman could prevail upon himself to reason on so frightful a subject.

It is not an easy matter to determine, on that people who approach nearest to the chattering generation. Mallicollo, Tanna, and New Caledonia in the South Seas, afford, I believe, the most striking proofs of an affinity. In these countries, we are told, the natives are extraordinarily hairy all over their body, the back not excepted: their skulls likewise, we are informed, are of a singular conformation; the forehead from the beginning of the nose, together with the rest of the head, being much depressed and inclining backward: in short, that the appearance of the whole frame, the very look and countenance, are apish, and strongly expressive of a family resemblance.

These

These, indeed, are not the only people who may be thought akin to the monkey tribe; they are sufficient, however, for our present purpose, especially as in their configuration, they have as determinate traits of relationship as the *Quojas Morros* of Africa, of whom we have the following description: one of these animals was formerly brought over from Congo to Holland, and presented to Frederick Henry, then Prince of Orange. It was about as tall as a child three years old, moderately corpulent, but square built, and well proportioned; the fore part of the body without hair, and all the back part covered with hair of a black colour. At first sight, its face resembled that of a man, but its nose was flat and snubbed; its ears were like those of the human species; its breasts, for it was a female, were full, its navel was indented, its shoulders well hung, its hands divided into fingers and thumbs, and the calves

of its legs and its heels plump and fleshy. She walked erect, and could raise and carry burdens not over heavy.

But the animals of all others the most extraordinary, are the Albinoes of Africa; and the diminutive race that was discovered by the Spaniards under Vasco Nugnez de Balboa on the Isthmus of Darien. The accounts of them, as collected from travellers and naturalists, are thus given by two very elegant and very profound historians: the Albinoes, according to M. de Voltaire, are a very considerable nation who inhabit the interior parts of Africa. “ Their weakness,” says he, “ does not allow them to make “ excursions far from the caverns which “ they inhabit. The negroes, nevertheless, catch some of them at times, “ and these we purchase as curiosities. I have seen two of them; a “ thousand Europeans have seen some. “ To

“ To say that they are dwarf negroes,
 “ whose skin has been blanched by a
 “ kind of leprosy, is like saying, that the
 “ blacks themselves are whites blackened
 “ by the leprosy. An Albinoe no more
 “ resembles a Guinea negroe, than he
 “ does an Englishman or a Spaniard.
 “ Their whiteness is not like ours, it
 “ does not appear like flesh, it has no
 “ mixture of white and brown, it is the
 “ colour of linen or rather of bleached
 “ wax; their hair and eye-brows are like
 “ the finest and softest silk; their eyes
 “ have no sort of similitude with those
 “ of other men, but are very like part-
 “ ridges’ eyes. Their shape resembles
 “ that of the Laplanders; but their
 “ head that of no other nation what-
 “ ever, as their hair, eyes, and ears,
 “ are all different; and they seem to have
 “ nothing that belongs to man but the
 “ stature of their bodies, with the fa-
 “ culty

“ culty of speaking and thinking, but in
 “ a degree very different from ours.”

This description of the Albinoes, from the animated pen of Voltaire, we will follow with that of the diminutive race in Darien, as given us by Dr. Robertson in his History of the Southern Continent of America: “ Lionel Wafer,” says this elegant writer, “ a traveller possessed of
 “ more curiosity and intelligence than
 “ we should have expected in an associate
 “ of buccaneers. This man discovered
 “ in the Isthmus of Darien, a small, but
 “ singular, race of people: they are of
 “ low stature, according to his description,
 “ of a feeble make, and incapable
 “ of enduring fatigue; their colour is a
 “ dead milk white, not resembling that
 “ of a fair people among Europeans, but
 “ without any tincture of a blush or
 “ sanguine complexion. Their skin is
 “ covered with a fine hairy down of a
 “ chalky

“ chalky white ; the hair of their head,
 “ their eye-brows, and eye-lashes, are
 “ of the same hue ; their eyes of a sin-
 “ gular form, so that they can hardly
 “ bear the light of the sun, but they
 “ see clearly by moon-light, and are
 “ most active and gay in the night. No
 “ race similar to this has been discovered
 “ in any other part of America. Cor-
 “ tes, indeed, found some people exactly
 “ resembling the white people of Darien,
 “ among the rare and monstrous animals
 “ which Montezuma had collected.”

In laying thus before you a minute de-
 scription of each of these extraordinary
 people, if we may call them people, I
 have meant nothing more than merely to
 shew you, in palpable instances, and those
 from different countries, “ that there is
 “ more in this world than is dreamt of
 “ in our philosophy ;” and that it is im-
 possible

possible arbitrarily to decide where the one species terminates, and where the other commences : all is inscrutable to the ignorant and imperfect perceptions of man.

There are authors, indeed, of great ability, and Voltaire you may perceive is one, who, without the smallest hesitation, admit both the Albinoes and Dariens to be of the human race ; and that even the Ouran-Outang is of the same family, though in a greater degree of degeneration. But these positions are warmly combated ; orthodox writers admit not of such unhallowed doctrine : nothing is allowed by them that will not tend to establish the distinct pre-eminence and dignity of our nature.

That there is an extraordinary similitude of parts between the social being
and

and the man of the woods, is most certain. The great difference is in the supposed stupidity of the latter, and its unacquaintance with the powers of speech; but I know not, I confess, how far this manner of reasoning will hold good. Speech may or may not be natural to man; this, however, is clear, speech is acquired by imitation. May it not be conjectured, therefore, in the true spirit of Pyrrhonism, that from the efforts of society, and from the wonderful capacity of the mind for receiving knowledge and improvement, that man has exalted himself far above what he was originally from nature; and that his superiority over the other branches of the doubtful species, is solely the result of culture and experience? I am sure a conjecture of this nature, and I cry your mercy, gentlemen, for saying it, is much more rational than that of Des Cartes, who
files

stiles the whole class of animals which approximate so closely to the human, nothing better than Automaton; nothing more than machines.

FRAGMENT

F R A G M E N T XXIX.

FROM the unpleasing train of thought into which the last essay may have thrown you, I now gladly solicit your attention to a subject of easier comprehension : the contemplation of a numerous people, a people whose country hath been indifferently explored, but whose manners have been depreciated with prejudice and ill humour ; in a word, they have not been observed with that candour which every nation is entitled to. A great body should always be studied with the kindest allowance ; for the variety of character to be met with in it, the **temper**s, the dispositions, the habits **of** millions, are not to be understood from the conduct or the extravagancies of a few.

The

The country of Malayo extends over the greatest part of the peninsula which goes under that designation: it is singularly beautiful, clad in an eternal spring, and though situated under, and immediately in the neighbourhood of the equator, is yet so regularly blessed with morning and evening showers, “that
 “the little hills rejoice on every side,
 “and the vallies shout for joy.” Exclusive of this considerable dominion on the continent, the Malays also possess the greatest number of those islands that are scattered over the eastern seas of Asia.

The religion of the Malays is in common Mohammedan; it crept in among them shortly after the first disciples of the Koran had established themselves in India. With the faith of the Mohammedans, however, the Malays did not imbibe the principles of their government; they still adhered to their established

lished system, the feudal tenure; and that tenure is, to this day, the prevailing form of legislature among them. They improve, indeed, on what was once the custom of Europeans; they admit of no villanage or personal slavery.

The usual epithet bestowed upon the Malays (though very unjustly) is that of savage; they rather appear to me a civilized people. Their houses, it is true, are built in general with cane and rattan; and it is likewise true, that they are neither sumptuous nor gaudy in their dress or appearance; but this seems to me nothing more than the consequence of a fine climate, and of an universal inclination to possess the comforts and the conveniencies of life with as much simplicity, and with as little trouble as possible. But there are not wanting instances of several well-built towns, and of considerable symptoms of refinement among them.

The

The city of Achin still shews that it was a place of some importance long before Europeans had discovered a passage to the East.

The surest means of acquiring improvement in the great business of society is, we are told, by commerce; this is an undoubted fact. Admitted, therefore, in its ordinary extent, the Malays have had every opportunity of reaping that sort of knowledge which, it is supposed, can alone soften and humanize the mind. With the Hindoos and the Chinese, the oldest civilized nations with which we are acquainted, they have had a trade from the earliest periods of time; and why should they not be allowed to have profited themselves of these opportunities? To assert that they have not, is to assert arbitrarily, and without proof. But that which to my mind sets their improvement beyond the possibility of doubt is,
that

that in all commercial transactions, a scrupulous honesty is found to be their ruling principle ; and they are unsuspicious in the highest degree. From the foreign merchant, whom they never saw before, they will purchase such commodities as they want, on the bare credit of his word ; and though unacquainted with the scientific law of nations, and so situated as to be debarred all hope of reparation should fraud be practised on them, they yet, in the excess of good faith, are never apprehensive of any sinister design ; nor can they admit the idea that they themselves are to be suspected.

This fair character, I know, will be denied the Malays ; I am sorry for it ; but I am free to say, I think they are entitled to it. Proofs, in repeated instances, have come within my own knowledge, of the reliance they have on the honour of strangers ; and the universal dependence

dence which is placed on their honesty in the purchase of those bags of gold dust which they annually send from their coasts, and which are never either inspected or assayed, is evidence sufficient that they are to be trusted. In fact, in this very valuable article in which the people of Hindostan deal considerably, I never heard of any unfair practice. The intrinsic value of the dust is always found such as it is declared to be.

While we are on this subject, it may not be out of the way to remark, that the greatest quantity of gold dust imported into India, is from Achin, above mentioned, situated on the north-west extremity of the island of Sumatra. This place has long attracted the attention of the curious; but whether it be the Ophir of Solomon, as is contended, is difficult to determine: “and they came
“to Ophir and fetched from thence,
“gold,

“ gold, four hundred and twenty talents,
 “ and brought it to King Solomon.” The
 name of a mountain immediately in sight
 of the harbour of Achin, and down
 whose sides the chief part of the gold
 that is collected, is washed, is most cer-
 tainly Ophir, at least the natives call it
 so; but whether they learnt the word
 Ophir from the Tyrians or the Euro-
 peans, who resided formerly among them,
 or whether it be the proper name of the
 mountain, I will not take upon me to de-
 termine. It is sufficient, I think, for us
 to know, in support of its being the
 scripture Ophir, that the voyage might
 have been made by Solomon’s ships.

During one part of the year, the south
 west winds blow invariably down the
 Arabian Gulph; and during the other,
 the north east winds prevail. With the
 first of these, therefore, the royal ships
 or prows, or whatever they were, had it

in their power, with ease, to reach Achin in two or three months; and with the latter, to return in as inconsiderable a space of time. Camoens, one of the first Portuguese navigators to the East, seems strongly to favour this opinion in his beautiful poem of the *Lusiad*, and as his authority cannot be considered as an indifferent one, I have a pleasure in ad-
ducing it.

“ To this fair isle, the golden Chersonese,
“ Some deem the Sapient monarch, plow’d the seas,
“ Ophir its Tyrian name.”

LUSIAD.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXX.

IN the interior parts of some of the principal Malay islands, a singular people, I am told, have been discovered, who are different in figure, language, and customs, not only from the Malays themselves, but from every other nation of the East. These are probably the Aborigines; a future day may possibly bring to light something satisfactory on this subject, at present, from want of information, I am necessarily obliged to confine myself to the inhabitants of the coasts.

The language of the Malays is wonderfully harmonious, abounding in the softest and most liquid sounds; the Italian, perhaps, is not superior to it. Tavernier

says it was diffused, in his time, throughout the whole peninsula of Malay, even to the dominions of the Grand Mogul; and that it was studied for its beauty and copiousness, infinitely more than Greek and Latin by Europeans in the western hemisphere. It is extraordinary, however, that this fine language, and one so greatly admired, should be without an arbitrary character for its expression. The characters used by the Malays, in writing, are chiefly Arabic, and the mode in which they write is exactly the same, from right to left.

It is a known and a just observation, that a people in a state of freedom and independency, are peculiarly addicted to poetic compositions; and the reason is evident, passion, sentiment, and fine feelings, are the growth of liberty, and all these have naturally the power of producing the most forcible expressions, and
the

the most lively imagery. The warrior and the lover seldom speak but in animated and well-measured numbers.

But poetry without music, when the ear alone is to be relied on, can never have the certainty of not being forgotten; rude attempts, therefore, have always been made in the infancy of poetry, to draw in the assistance of harmony and music. In the state of freedom and independency, therefore, in which I have represented the Malays, and possessed of a language the child of harmony itself, it cannot be doubted but that both their metre and music are pleasing and full of fire. The fact is, they are so; no European people have a greater variety of strains, almost all of them pleasing, than the Malays. Scientifically, indeed, they do not understand the principles of music; but from the delicacy of their ear, and their aptitude at learning these prin-

ciples when they leave their own country, they shew, demonstratively, that they have made a considerable progress in the knowledge of the natural, though wild and irregular, properties of sound.

The Malays are in common of an inferior size to Europeans, as indeed are all the inhabitants of the torrid zone. They are of a reddish yellow colour, with a profusion of long straight hair, which they in general cut for the conveniency of wearing on the crown of the head a small Arabic cap. The women are in size proportioned to the men; they braid their hair in pretty fancied forms. In the more considerable towns, both women and men not only dress with decency, but many of them with taste and elegance. Taken altogether, however, their appearance is not very agreeable to an European, especially that of the lower sort of women,

women, who distend their ears to a frightful size by means of elastic reeds, which constantly keep enlarging the orifice of the ear into which they are at first put, until it almost touches the shoulder : an outré vanity, it must be confessed ; but vanity is not confined—it is the produce of every soil ; and is only outré as the circumstances which gave it rise are unknown, or rise in contradiction to what is deemed right by local and prejudiced impression.

An immoderate love of play is evidently a striking feature in the character of this people ; nay, to such excesses do they carry it, that like the Germans, as we are told by Tacitus, they venture their liberties, and every thing that is dear to them, on the cast of a die. “ He
 “ that loses, voluntarily becomes the slave
 “ of the winner.” First goes the property ;

perty ; next the wife and children, and lastly the wretch himself.

It is not incurious to reflect on this disposition for gaming ; nor is it unworthy of attention to observe, how strongly the same propensity operates among all men : with the Malay or the American, for instance, in his native woods ; and with the European surrounded with luxury and refinement. Indolence and want of employment, are manifestly the causes which first impel the mind to seek gratification in this inordinate, this ruinous passion. Could a man force himself to industrious applications, the spirit of play would soon evaporate ; but some, as among Europeans, are placed above the necessity of labour ; and others, as among the Malays and Americans, despise it. Hence universally arises that *ennui*, that listlessness, that indifference to every pursuit but that of chance, when the
mind

mind agitated, and every generous feeling of the soul absorbed, the man at length becomes totally involved in all the mazes of uncertainty, in all the heart-rending distractions of apprehension.

The Malays, though somewhat ferocious in their look, are yet, as I have already said, courteous and affable to strangers; and whatever may be said to the contrary, they assuredly are considerably more advanced in the principles of civilization, than were the inhabitants of most parts of your now charming Europe a very few centuries ago. That we read of their frantic extravagance at Batavia and other places belonging to the Dutch, is certain; but to which side are we to attribute the causes of those horrid lengths to which they have been seen to carry their resentment? Are they to be looked for in the original texture of his soul,

foul, that the Malay, reduced to madness and despair, with his hair dishevelled, his body anointed with oil, and a poignard in each hand, shall fly at a friend or foe indiscriminately ; murder attending every blow, while he, as a common enemy to mankind, is pursued, shot at, and cut, till he is ultimately destroyed ? Or is it to be accounted for, in the haughty supremacy assumed, and rigorously, nay barbarously exercised, by a cruel taskmaster, over a free and independent being, breathing his own native air, and treading on the soil heretofore the property of his fathers ?

Humanity would here wish that the obloquy could fall on the people the least connected with us ; but the voice of truth is too loud to be suppressed. The madness of the Malays, the madness, I mean, which is premeditatedly raised by opium, is generally well known to be the result
of

of injury and harsh usage: they are driven to madness, and they deal round destruction without mercy.

“ —If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us
 “ do we not laugh? And if you wrong us, shall we not
 “ revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will re-
 “ semble you in that. What you teach us we will exe-
 “ cute; and it shall go hard but we will better the in-
 “ struction.”

SHAKESPEARE.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXXI.

I CANNOT conclude the subject of the Malays, without taking notice of a late discovery made among the inhabitants of the interior parts of certain of the islands of Malayo, namely, that of their devouring such prisoners as fall into their hands in war; a custom stained with the deepest tinge of barbarism and inhumanity, and which for the honour of man, I hoped, had been exploded in every country where the smallest traces of civilization could be discerned. But the fact, I am afraid, is beyond the possibility of doubt; it comes to us with too many marks of authenticity to be disbelieved.

The Malays, in this instance of savage ferocity, in a great degree descend from
that

that character which I am desirous you should think they really possess; but, incompatible as such ferocity may appear with refinement, there yet have been other nations, probably, as much improved in the principles of society as the Malays, who have been found to devour such unhappy persons as have fallen to them in captivity. The custom, we know, was universal in the Mexican dominion, when first discovered by the Spaniards; nor is it difficult to trace it likewise to the no less civilized Peruvians.

Barbarous, however, as this practice must indisputably be held, it still is nearly paralleled by an infinitely more celebrated people than either the Americans or the Malays; a people whom we are taught to look upon as gods. The Romans allowed of torture, and even of death, to be inflicted on prisoners taken in war. They did not, indeed, like the Iroquois, say to each

each other, “Come, let us go, and eat
 “such and such nations.” The principle,
 however, was to the full as bad. In cold
 blood to destroy a brave, an honourable
 character, for nobly fighting for his
 country, was not, in the smallest degree,
 less atrocious, than the devouring him
 in revenge; for revenge must be confi-
 dered as the first, and the ruling passion
 of the cannibal.

It will not be found to redound at all
 to the credit of human nature, when the
 universality of this practice comes to be
 looked into. Scarcely any country in
 the world but has had its æra of man-
 eating. The old world had tradition of
 various nations addicted to the use of hu-
 man flesh; the new, in which we are all
 included, has afforded repeated instances
 of the like depravity.—America, almost
 from one end of its vast continent to
 the

the other, and all the various islands which have lately been discovered in the southern hemisphere.

Man, neither from instinct, nor from the passion of hunger, could ever have been driven, while herding with his fellow creatures, to the necessity of eating human flesh. The extremity of want, in certain cases, hath indeed reduced some unhappy sufferers to the dreadful alternative of either doing so or starving; but the instances have been few, and distraction or madness hath generally preceded such bloody acts. The accounts, therefore, that we have both in ancient and modern writers of whole nations who have taken human flesh as their common, as their general food, cannot but be exaggerated; travellers have been mistaken. They have branded those with the unqualified name of Anthropophagi, who
have

have done nothing more, perhaps, “ than
“ boil and eat the broth of their ene-
“ mies.”

Were any people professedly cannibals, one would suppose the most southern inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego to be so, who are the most miserable of all human beings ; and who not having provision, such as is procurable in other countries, are compelled to feed on raw seals' flesh, and that frequently in its most putrid state. And yet the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego are not cannibals, either from necessity or from revenge ; but, indeed, that which puts the impossibility of it beyond a doubt is, the forbearance always shewn when the weaker sex or when children are brought into captivity. It has rarely happened that women or children have suffered : the fierce barbarian thirsts for the blood of none but him
who

who stimulates his ardour, and who opposes him in the field.

When we consider the cannibal, therefore, as actuated solely by the spirit of revenge, we shall not so readily subscribe to the opinion, that the eating of human flesh necessarily implies a total privation of every benevolent affection; neither shall we any longer wonder at it, among men but moderately civilized, when the page of European history can almost match it in barbarity. I refer to the sixteenth century, a century which exhibited many of the most bloody tragedies. No one, however, more diabolically inhuman than the carnage at the memorable siege of Malta: at a storm of a fortress on that island by the Turks, all such of the garrison as were found alive when it fell into the enemy's hands, had their bellies ript up, and their hearts torn out,

while the adverse party, in the fury of dreadful retaliation, massacred all the Mohammedans they could lay hold of, and severing their heads from their bodies, fired them, instead of shot, into the camp of their friends.

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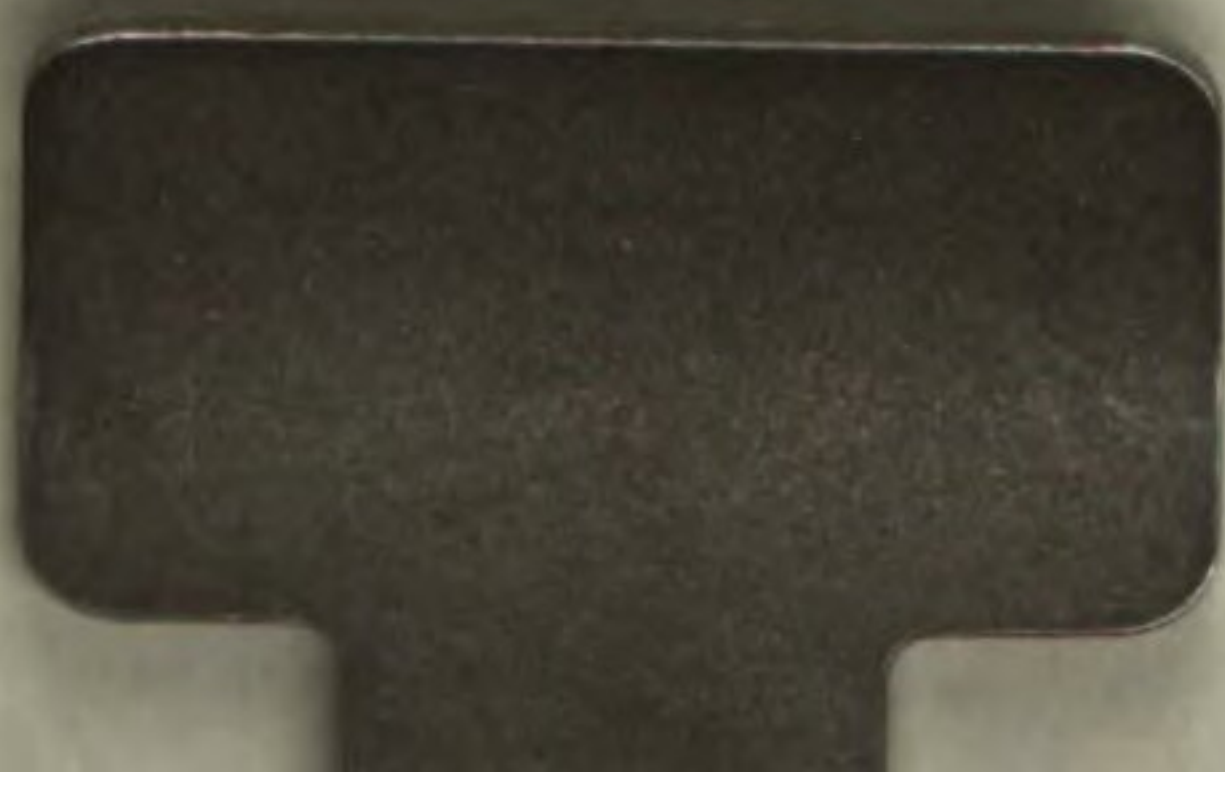
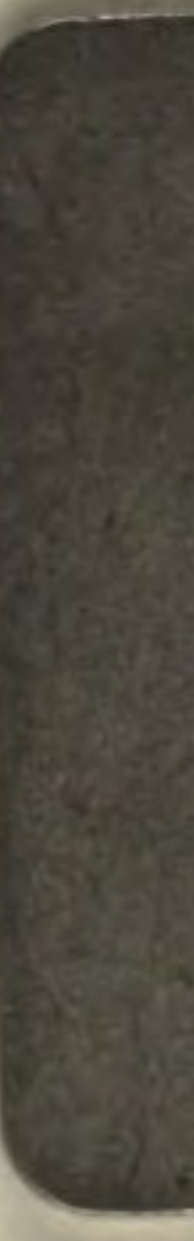
- Page 80, line 5, for *Cashmin*, read *Cashmire*.
— 154, — 17, for *iniciating*, read *initiating*.
— 197, — 10, for *completion*, read *complexion*.
— 201, — 12, for *vessalage*, read *vassalage*.
— 240, — 5, for *insepected*, read *inspected*.

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